SHAKESPEARE'S WORKSHOP

W. J. LAWRENCE

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SHAKESPEARE'S WORKSHOP

By W. J. LAWRENCE
Author of *The Elizabethan Playhouse*

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TO

SAMUEL A. TANNENBAUM

PREFATORY NOTE

This is a book of reprints. Of the studies it comprises the first, second and fifth originally appeared in *The Fortnightly Review*, the third in *The Dublin Magazine*, the fourth and seventh in *The Criterion*, the sixth in *The Times Literary Supplement*, the eighth in *The Nineteenth Century and After*, and the ninth and tenth in *The Irish Statesman*. All have been carefully revised and some in a measure re-written. The notes, it is almost needless to say, are entirely new. To the various proprietors who have courteously permitted re-publication I tender my grateful thanks.

W.J.L.

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SHAKESPEARE'S WORKSHOP

THERE is heavy need for Shakespearean scholarship to go out into the open and do some missionary work. Notwithstanding all the din it has been making behind closed doors, it is surprising how little it has done to combat the popular impression—so derogatory to our national self-respect and so subversive of the truth—that the Elizabethan drama was the product of a rank latudinarianism, of a dislike for and rejection of all rules, and that its adventurers were foolish enough to send out argosies such as had rarely sailed the seas without chart or compass. The result is that what should be one of our chief glories still remains our shame. Confronted by that noble army of pedants which marches under the banner of Aristotle, we have lowered our colours and apologized for the very existence of the Elizabethan drama, pleading Shakespeare, however, in mitigation of our offence. So long, indeed, have we remained in this abject attitude that we have grown to look upon the Master as something wholly apart, neither man nor god, a law unto himself. We forget that if he towered head and shoulders above all the dramatists of his time, still he linked hands with one and all, and stood on the same Mother Earth.

It is worth while getting on nodding terms with Shakespeare, but it cannot be done without a long apprenticeship. You cannot fully enjoy his acquaintance until you have imbibed a sound knowledge of his environment. To shirk this labour is to run the risk of worshipping him indiscriminately or not at all. In this way are Baconian and other heretics bred. Unfortunately there is no present hope of staying this fundamental misconception or these accretive aberrations. They will continue until the day when scholarship rises to the emergency and sends forth a new Aristotle capable of demonstrating that the Elizabethan drama, so far from being amorphous, has as many cardinal principles as the Greek, and probably obeyed a greater number of minor rules.

For the simple reason that all great drama connotes not only an audience, but an audience composed of average minds of a certain racial particularity at a certain period, no age and no country possess the right to impose dramatic laws on any other age or any other country. Greece was wise enough to deviate occasionally from Aristotleian precepts, and outside Greece they had no innate moral writ. Yet the early European drama is a sea on which for every gallant barque that still sails, dozens have been wrecked on those magnetic rocks, the Unities. Nemesis rules even in the realms of art, and, though contrary to the Johnsonian dictum, the drama's laws the

drama's patrons have not always been allowed to give, they generally manage to avenge any usurpation of their rights. When the modern drama arose only two nations had self-respect enough to turn away from the alluring shackles of the Stagyrite. Where Italy and France failed, and suffered for long by their failure, Spain and England triumphed. The reward for the one was an unchallenged pre-eminence, and for both a priority of flowering. If we are to believe that every public gets the dramatists it deserves, where shall we rank the public whose guerdon was Marlowe, Shakespeare and Ben Jonson? Must we not place it beside the inspirational audience of Periclean Athens?

Apart from the predilections of its motley-minded public, two other factors went to the architectonics of Elizabethan drama: the economy of the playhouse, which, in formulating its physical conditions, imposed most of the constructive laws which ruled throughout, and the shreds and patches of Senecan prescript insinuated by the university wits. Resolutely opposing the age-long tyranny of the Unities because of its hostility to the romantic spirit of the hour, the early theatre dramatists established a number of simple laws which, in enforcing a like discipline, gave greater freedom to the play of ideas.

First, as to the influence of the audience. Half-satyr, half-god, the Elizabethan playgoer was

imaginative. He had, indeed, an imagination so plastic that he could run with rapid ease over the entire gamut of human emotion; from the low notes of bestiality to the final thrills of spiritual exaltation. It was all one with him whether the poet chose to grovel on a dunghill or fly into the empyrean. Mediæval-minded and pageant-loving, his great desire was for ocular demonstration. Nothing for him was too horrible to be shown: Greek squeamishness was in his eyes abomination. He revelled in bloody sights and acts of cruelty. He believed in ghosts, devils, witches, hobgoblins. Nothing if not combative, he delighted in vigorous encounters and rough and tumble fun, yet could listen complacently to a grave oration replete with wise saws and modern instances. His taste was more for a tale (and preferentially a familiar tale), told with minuteness of circumstance in terms of drama, than for a play which distorted the tale for purely dramaturgic ends. Untouched by culture, he was no stickler for local colour. No matter how remote in time or place the theme discussed, he liked it decked out in homely English guise, and with a strong flavour of his own times. And for the most part he got what he liked, Ben Jonson alone protesting: there was purposefulness in all Shakespeare's anachronisms. His chiefest relish was for romance expressed in terms of familiar realism, and, so far as it was humanly possible in the existing conditions, both

dramatists and players acceded to his wishes. But, owing to the scanty, unperfected theatrical appliances of the time, there were limits to their powers of ocular demonstration, and again and again he had to be asked to piece out their imperfections with his mind. Fired by the poet's imagery, that splendid substitute for things unshowable, his imagination seldom failed to rise to the occasion. Hence it was that Elizabethan drama was largely a thing of petty shifts and compromises; and therein lies its glory. Aiming at reality, and as often as not baulked by the defectiveness of the medium in which it worked, it became, because of this very defectiveness, more than half ideal.

How well advised was the popular dramatist in resisting the lure of the Unities is shown by the fact that of the few conventions adopted by him from classical prescript, most proved a check to progress. To begin with, it was due to his acceptance of the Horatian five-act principle that the English drama remained floridly rhetorical until well into the nineteenth century. On the modern stage, the three-act mould is the true mould—a beginning, a middle and an end—and there are few themes which, if swiftly and logically pursued, cannot be scientifically discussed within its limits. The immediate result of this initial bowing to the Horatian law was that, save in the case of Chronicle Histories, no theme but had perforce to be bombasted out like the Elizabe-

than's trunk slops. Hence, the main plot, so far from pursuing a clear course, had to run an obstacle race. Temptations to eke out a grave tale with extraneous comic matter were not to be resisted, especially as English audiences had been regaled with interpositions of the sort from the earliest days of the moralities. Nor was this the only means essayed to cover a stretch of canvas much too vast for its subject: resort was often made to that characteristic of the old Roman Comedy, the double plot.

There can be little doubt that the Senecan over-tones which are to be detected in Elizabethan tragedy crept in insidiously while the early theatre dramatist was busily engaged trying to evolve a new technique. As Jonson was taught when he came to write *Sejanus* and *Catiline*, undiluted Seneca was highly distasteful to the masses. In Elizabethan hands, the chorus became the shadow of its former substance, and lost all the denotements of its ancestry. Instead of forming the nucleus of the play, it was transmuted into a clumsy expedient for indicating lapses of time and conveying details of intervening events. So, too, that Senecan offshoot, the dumb show, whose use Shakespeare so largely shunned and so contemptuously referred to, was shorn on the popular stage of that cloudy symbolism so characteristic of its employment on academic boards, and became for the most part a sort of

silent chorus, since it conveyed to the eye what the other conveyed to the ear. When one, in seeking to avoid the accusation of loading the dice against classical prescript, looks round about for some indication of its beneficence, one finds it at last in the Senecan soliloquy, which, in permitting a lesser evil to be substituted for a greater, undoubtedly made for progress. The soliloquy effectually ousted that highly inartistic convention, the speech of direct appeal, a relic of the old moralities involving frank recognition of the audience. It was something to have abstracted the player mentally and spiritually from his audience.

Essential as it is that all these matters should be borne in mind, it is not until we come to consider with minute particularity the formative influence of playhouse economics on the nascent English drama that we are able to watch William Shakespeare in his workshop, and note how deftly he handles the rudely fashioned tools made by his predecessors from time to time, as the occasion demanded. At the outset, one puzzle confronts us, a puzzle which can only be solved by tracing the history of English acting almost to its beginning, certainly to a period long anterior to the building of the first theatres. One remarks that, although questions of ways and means necessitated a strict limitation of the number of players in a company, there was not in Elizabethan days as there is now an equally strict limitation of the number of

dramatis personæ. Thus, while a company rarely comprised more than sixteen or eighteen members, a chronicle history like *The Raigne of King Edward the Third* was capable of presenting the formidable number of forty characters, great and small. This remarkable disparity points to excessive 'doubling' just as the persistent prodigality of characterization points to doubling, not as an occasional, deprecated expedient, but an accepted principle. The truth is that the players were pursuing a highly serviceable convention which had been rigorously maintained from the very beginning of the secular drama. Remark that, though the regulated number of interlude players in a company early in Elizabeth's reign was four and no more, so small a body thought nothing of undertaking the performance of a morality like *The Tyde Tarrieth for No Man*, with its eighteen characters, despite the fact that the task involved two men playing six parts each, one man four, and one man two. Clearly, even in the budding days of the English Drama, the principle of doubling had already begun to call for niceties of construction, since it was essential that doubled characters should never meet. It is vital for us to bear in mind that, although the enlargement and better regulation of companies in the early theatre period gave some release from the tyrannies of doubling, doubling continued to be practised in a modified form and had to be reckoned with by

every working dramatist. Since nothing had a greater influence on the dramaturgic trend of the times, it is requisite to give some consideration to the restrictions the system imposed.

The main distinction between the methods of the old interlude players and the methods of the Elizabethan theatre players was that only a small proportion—about a fourth—of the constituents of a theatre company were expected to double parts. Those who sustained the chief characters, the characters which figured throughout the play, were absolved from further duty ; so, too, were the boys who took the younger female parts. One notes that even in a profusely charactered chronicle play the female parts seldom exceeded four, otherwise the regulation number of young-women impersonators in a company. (Elderly women were played by men, and were sometimes doubled with male characters.) It must be borne in mind that, while adult players abounded, competent boy-players for the Juliets and Rosalinds were scarce. They were the product of long and careful training. These reservations point to the fact that theatrical doubling, so far from being general, fell upon a particular class. In every Elizabethan company there were two distinct grades of adult players, the sharers and the hired men. The latter were the articled servants of the former, and were inferior in so far as they merely received modest wages, instead of enjoying, as did

their masters, a certain dividend out of the daily profits. But it would be a mistake to view them one and all as nothing better than supernumeraries. Many of them were players of an accomplished versatility, and, as it was from their ranks the sharers were recruited, most of them resembled the French private of yore and carried imaginatively a field-marshal's baton in their knapsacks. That they became well practised in the niceties of character-differentiation is evidenced by the fact that on them all the responsibilities of doubling fell. But it must be borne in mind that, if a hireling sustained as many as three or four minor characters in a play, he usually finished with one character before taking up another, and that there were often restful intervals between. He was in much better case than the old interlude-player, from whom quick-changing was incessantly demanded, and who ran the risk of becoming befogged through character-alternation.

Let us, then, see how this compulsory system operated upon dramatic construction. Owing to its impositions, few characters in a play had staying power. Out of a possible thirty or thereabouts, not more than seven or eight could hold out from first to last. In other words, the evanescence of the minor characters was in direct ratio with their abundance. Faced by the serious disparity between the average number of *dramatis personæ* and the normal number of players, the

dramatist had no alternative once he had introduced as many characters as exhausted his player-stock, but, by hook or by crook, to get rid of some of them before he could bring on others. Sometimes, he was able to kill them neatly off, but, more often than not, they simply disappeared.

Of the paramount influence of doubling, no better example exists than that afforded by *Hamlet*. It will be recalled that to this most popular of all tragedies, Dr. Johnson awards 'the praise of variety,' because 'new characters appear from time to time in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life and particular modes of conversation.' Evidently, the Leviathan was unaware that this perpetual stream of short-lived characters was, for Shakespeare, more a matter of necessity than choice. Remark how the demands of doubling force his hand. Francisco mysteriously melts away after the first scene, Bernardo and Marcellus fret and strut no longer than the first act. In the brevity of his span, Reynaldo is like the proverbial snowflake in the river. The three Players only hold out from Act II, sc. 2 to Act III, sc. 2. Just as we reach the middle of the play Polonius meets with his death, and the Ghost disappears for good. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, having served their purpose, are flung on the scrap-heap after Act IV, sc. 4. But the cry is still they come, and Fortinbras and the Captain make their first appearance just before

Rosencrantz' and Guildenstern's final departure. What we require to take particular note of is that by the end of the third act eight of the characters have ceased to be, nine having been killed off or thrown nonchalantly into the puppet-box. The following bald summary of the choppings and changes in the play is eloquent of the peculiarities of Elizabethan construction, and yields a good object-lesson in the operations of doubling:

ACT I.—Three minor characters begin and end.
ACT II.—Presents six new characters, three of them doubled by players seen in Act I.
ACT III.—Employs no fresh characters, but five old ones disappear.
ACT IV.—Five new characters introduced, and two old characters withdrawn.
ACT V.—Presents six new characters.

A careful analysis of a variety of Elizabethan plays shows that the method here followed is by no means exceptional. Marlowe, being Shakespeare's precursor, is, in this connection, especially instructive. One notes in *The First Part of Tamburlaine* the same constant stream of comers and goers.[1]

One of the most striking distinctions between the theatrical present and the theatrical past is that, whereas to-day the actor is engaged for the part, in Shakespeare's day the part was composed for the actor. In the early seventeenth century,

plays were never written on speculation and hawked about from company to company. We have proof of this in the Printer's Address to the Reader prefixed in 1620 to *The Two Merry Milkmaids*, wherein it is stated as a simple matter of fact that

> 'Every Writer must governe his Penne according to the Capacitie of the Stage he writes to, both in the Actor and the Auditor.'

Put otherwise, this implies that the workaday dramatist, in framing his play, had to bear in mind not only the artistic qualities and physical peculiarities of the particular players who had commissioned the work, but the likes and dislikes of the particular public for whom they catered. Not even Shakespeare himself when at the height of his powers was exempt from this obligation. None save Ben Jonson, the self-opinionated, was arrogant and impolitic enough to kick against the pricks. Hence, for those capable of reading the portents, there is clear trace of Shakespeare's players in Shakespeare's plays. Beyond doubt, Rosaline, Rosalind and Beatrice were all there inspired by the quick-wittedness, the nimble tongue and fine histrionic powers of the one boy-player. So, too, Biron, Mercutio, and Benedick were probably framed for the one man. Analogies of this order tend to show which of the Master's plays were closely grouped together. Here, for example, are the indications that *Love's Labour's*

Lost and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* belong to the same period. Rosaline is swarthy—'no face is fair that is not full so black'—and so likewise is Hermia, since Lysander characterizes her as 'yon Ethiope.' It might, of course, be argued that this swarthiness was matter of make-up, not of personal pecularity, but it must be borne in mind that in those days of sun-lit acting, facial make-up was not so imperative or so much studied as it is now. It seems more likely that Shakespeare was deftly pressing into dramatic service the dark complexion of a certain boy-player. That he dwelt on the physical peculiarities of his exponents is beyond question. Hermia is not only swarthy but short, thus affording a marked contrast to Helena, who is tall and fair. The personalities of the quarrel scene are based on Shakespeare's familiarity with the two boys for whom he was writing the parts. Hermia is maddened by being called a puppet: 'though she be but little she is fierce.' (Might not her exponent have been the original Juliet?) Note her reference to Helena, 'her tall personage . . . because I am so dwarfish and so low.' There is good reason to believe also that Shakespeare in his first period had among his playhouse associates a preternaturally thin actor for whom he wrote a variety of gaunt characters, Pinch, Robert Faulconbridge, Starveling, and Sir Andrew Aguecheek among the number, and out of whose tenuity he extracted much laughter.[2] Others, too

made capital out of this 'rank, raw-boned anatomy,' notably Jonson in chiselling his Macilente in *Every Man Out of his Humour* and Dekker in hastily sketching Sir Vaughan in his *Satiromastix*.[3]

Even such an apparently trivial thing as the non-provision of programmes in the playhouse was not without its bearing on early dramatic construction. Plays had to be wholly self-contained, self-explanatory. It was requisite that characters when they first appeared should be addressed by their full style and title, and not with that familiarity a degree of intimacy on the part of the speaker would have justified: at all costs the audience had to be acquainted of the identity of the chief *dramatis personæ*. Thus, when Edward's consort makes a belated appearance in the fifth act of *The Raigne of King Edward the Third*, the king addresses her as 'Queene Phillip.' More curious still is it to find characters, in plays as widely separated as *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Eastward Hoe* taking the precaution to tell the audience who they are. Pedringano and Serberine both do this while soliloquizing in Kyd's long-popular play. Since the small-part men were in the habit of doubling several parts, it would seem that this system of self-naming was adopted to prevent confusion of identities. Occasionally, however, even in the Jacobean period, one finds this precautionary practice followed by more or less important undoubled characters. In *Eastward*

Hoe, Security, on making his first appearance, indulges in a soliloquy, the main design of which is to lead up to the concluding intimation, 'for I am security itself: my name is Security the famous usurer.' There is a smack of the old moralities about *naïveté* of this order, and yet three distinguished authors collaborated on the play.

Though much more care was taken in the naming of the characters than in oral conveyance of the precise locality in which the action was passing, it is reasonably assured that there were considerably fewer unlocated scenes than scholars have hitherto been inclined to believe. Textual reference was not the only means of localizing the action. Simple properties, the thrusting-out above of an inn-sign or a barber's pole, now and then proved indicative. In the pre-Shakespearean period inscribed boards were regularly employed to specify localities, but by the dawn of the seventeenth century this convention, except in the case of plays of adventure where the action passed rapidly from country to country, had fallen into disuse. To avoid the perpetual naming of localities, Shakespeare occasionally employed a curious indirect method implying a degree of concentrativeness on the part of the Elizabethan audience with which, in our conception of its turbulency, it has not hitherto been credited.[4] Scenes in themselves unlocated were located by a reference in a foregoing scene, sometimes a scene in a

previous act. (Intervals in those days were necessarily brief.) Thus, in *All's Well That Ends Well*, II, 1, the two French Lords signify their departure for the Florentine war, and, when next they appear, which is not until the opening of the third act, we are expected to understand—no clue being otherwise given—that they have arrived in Florence. The quality of any particular public can be roughly estimated by the amount of reliance made on its intelligence, and there was certainly in these cases a very remarkable reliance.

In order to distinguish between scene and scene and prevent confusion of localities, the Law of Re-entry was established.[5] Since movable scenery was not employed on Elizabethan boards and there was but occasional resort to indicative properties, some such provision as this became essential. The Law of Re-entry forbade the last speaker in a scene to be the first speaker in the next. Not only that, but if it was found requisite that a character forming part of a group at the end of a scene should open the next scene, that character had to go off solus shortly before the general departure.[6]

The rule, however, could be evaded where the action was continuous, and the removal somewhere contiguous, say to another part of the same building. A remarkable example is to be found in the fourth act of Heywood's late Cockpit play, *The English Traveller*. In the second scene, the

Clown gives an indication of the locality in saying 'This is the garden gate; and here am I set to stand sentinel.' Presently he leads Young Geraldine into old Wincott's house, and the succeeding scene is evidently staged on the space behind the curtains, as it opens with 'table and stools set out, lights, a banquet, wine.' Here, Young Geraldine, being left alone by old Wincott, decides to go and pay a visit to Mrs. Wincott in her room. 'This the path,' he says, 'that leads to my delights' (intervening stage direction, 'He goes in at one doore and comes out at another'). 'And this the gate unto't.' He then listens at the door of Mrs. Wincott's room, and finds that Delaval is there before him. In this case, a change of scene was supposed to take place in a middle of a sentence, with no longer pause than is marked by a comma.[7] Apart from these necessary exceptions, so strictly was the Law of Re-entry obeyed that, where we find it contravened, we have reason to suspect that clumsy revision has taken place and an intervening scene been removed.

Immediate re-entrances of the sort illustrated by the action in the fourth act of *The English Traveller*, were, however, so far avoided that another method of indicating continuity came into vogue. To a highly imaginative audience all things were possible, and when the dramatist found it inconvenient to send Mahomet to the mountain, he brought the mountain to Mahomet.

Thus, we sometimes find a group of characters assembled in an ante-room, and about to visit a sick man in his chamber. All of a sudden the journey is statically performed. The curtains of the rear stage are flung open and a bed thrust out containing the sick man. Hey presto! and the hocus-pocus of the imagination has swiftly changed the scene. If the Folio is to be believed, a magic transformation of this order took place in *The Second Part of Henry VI*, Act III, sc. 2, where the murdered body of Duke Humphrey is shown to the King. Sundry commentators, cursed with a twentieth-century intelligence, and, unhappily, not blessed with a sixteenth-century vision, have, on the strength of the Quarto, disputed this reading. Some of these muddiers of the waters have gone so far as to deny that beds were ever thrust out, thus emulating Dogberry and writing themselves down as sciolists. On this score, it needs but to cite one item of determining evidence out of the many, a sequence of stage direction from that noted old Red Bull play, *The Golden Age:*

'Enter the foure old Beldams drawing out Danae's bed, she in it. They place foure tapers at the foure corners. . . . Jupiter puts out the lights and makes unready. . . The bed is drawn in, and enter the Clowne new wak't.'

Here, the withdrawal of the bed signified the beginning of a new scene.

Remarkably enough, there was one composite

law of restricted application (apposite only to blank-verse drama), whose operations are traceable throughout the entire pre-Restoration era, but whose commandments are difficult to formulate, so irregularly were they followed or so liberally interpreted. This might be called—though the definition lacks comprehensiveness—the Law of the Effective Exit. It was under its ruling that the majority of scenes and acts had rhymed endings. So, too, a culminating couplet was generally given to the principal male characters before they went off the stage, or died. Qualifications have to be indulged in in describing its workings, since from different authors it received different interpretation, none, moreover, being very consistent in practice. Plays are not at all uncommon in which the law is strictly obeyed in one act and wholly flouted in the next. Unless we can impute these aberrations to wholesale revisal at a time when tags had fallen out of fashion, it would seem that the dramatist's attitude towards this law was for long consistent in its inconsistency. It is noteworthy that, whereas in the Marlowean period when its operations were strongest, the couplet-ending, whether for medial exits or scene-finishing, formed the natural and obvious close of the speech, a score of years later, or about the beginning of the seventeenth century, it came to be viewed more definitely as a tag and to assume an aphoristic tone.

It was at this period also that a curious method of embroidering upon the tag began to be practised, a method long and fitfully followed by Shakespeare and others, the necessity for which is so little apparent that one is puzzled to account not only for its origin but its persistence. This may be characterized as the principle of the spoiled tag. It consisted of robbing the concluding couplet, whether for medial exit or scene or act-ending, of its culminating effectiveness by the addition, mostly, of a broken line. At an act-ending it was sheer anti-climax.[8] Defence of some sort for the practice there must have been, but it is difficult to see on what lines it ran. If the idea was to avoid monotony, the end could have been better gained by the omission of the couplet—and, as a matter of fact, it frequently was omitted. Viewed from a theatrical standpoint, whether Elizabethan or our own, there can be no doubt as to which forms the finer climax, the Bastard's

> Nought shall make us rue,
> If England to itself do rest but true,

or Hamlet's—

> The time is out of joint, oh cursed spite
> That ever I was born to set it right.
> Nay, come let's go together.

Only one attempt has been made to account for the existence of spoiled tags, and, so far as it has

been considered, the proffered solution has not been deemed satisfactory. In dealing with their occurrence in *Hamlet* (which, roughly speaking has about six: Q. 2 and the Folio are not in accord), Dr. B. A. P. Van Dam writes:

'At the end of a scene the actor's exit caused more difficulties than it does nowadays. Now the curtain drops, but three centuries ago, when there was no curtain, the players had to leave in sight of the audience; there was therefore some need to explain the exit.'[9]

Consequently, we are told (the inference being that Shakespeare, the actor-dramatist, did not know his business) that the actor was compelled to add something to the text in order to get neatly and decently off the stage.

The objections to this theory are many. So far from there being any necessity to 'explain the exit,' the couplet explained it. It had no other *raison d'être* beyond heralding the actor's departure. Dr. Van Dam's *Times* reviewer, while in agreement with him that these half-lines 'are plainly introduced to help an actor off the stage,' refuses to believe that they were not the author's work, adding:

'Shakespeare was an actor himself. He must have seen his unwary fellows chanting their final couplet a long way from the door and unable to reach it gracefully: why should he not have helped them, and at the same time lessened the "staginess" of the old-fashioned couplet.'[10]

Yes, but if the old-fashioned couplet had already begun to be deemed stagy, in 1600, why not abandon it altogether? Not the most graceful exit could compensate for the anti-climax. Moreover, the difficulties of getting off the stage were not to be solved in this way. They have always existed. Dr. Van Dam ignores the circumstance that, despite the introduction of the front curtain at the Restoration, tableaux endings for acts were unknown in the English theatre before the close of the eighteenth century.[11] Down to that period it was the business of the player to time his exit in accord with his lines. He had to manœuvre for position. The tendency of those holding the stage in Shakespearean days would be to work backwards towards the end of the scene. We get occasional proof of this at the end of sundry old plays, where one of the actors leaves the general group and 'comes forward' to speak the epilogue.

Whatever the purpose served by the additional half-line, there is no valid reason for believing that the player had the option of introducing it. There was theatrical discipline even in Elizabethan days. One finds spoiled tags in plays written for the boy-players occupying the private theatres—notably in *Eastward Hoe*, *Bussy D'Ambois*, and *Ram Alley*—and it is not to be assumed that the boys had much initiative, or were permitted to do any more than what they were told to do.

THE MYSTERY OF *MACBETH*: A SOLUTION

FEW neater compliments have ever been paid to an English monarch than that tendered to James I when he first visited Oxford. The date was August 27, 1605. Immediately on his arrival, he was stayed in front of St. John's College by three youthful scholars arrayed as nymphs, who, in some resounding Latin verse penned by Matthew Gwynne,[12] explained that they were the olden sibyls who had prophesied the rule of Banquo's issue, and came now to promise him all happiness and the continuance of his dynasty upon the British throne. A trifle less than two months later, when the King's Players visited the University city, one at least of their number was much intrigued on hearing of the King's gratification over this well-conceived device. Prime among his rare capacities as actor-dramatist was that of exploiter to the full of all the potentialities of a new, good, and imperfectly-expanded idea, and his name (need it be said?) was William Shakespeare. In the rich soil of his brain the academic seed quickly germinated, and the result was the tragedy of *Macbeth*, produced, in all probability, at the Globe early in 1606. As preserved for us in the First Folio, this sublime creation resembles nothing

half so much as a vast and venerable Gothic cathedral after it has been tastelessly tinkered by an unimaginative restorer. The twilight gloom and mystic atmosphere remain, but there are jarring discords in the 'frozen music' which momentarily disturb the subtle harmonies of the ordonnance. An alien hand has long been detected in the play, particularly in the witch scenes, clear indication that, after the manner of the day, the text had suffered revisal once the bloom of novelty had worn off, with the view of giving the play fresh magnetism. Many as have been the attempts to solve the mystery of this sophistication, or, in other words, to determine when it was perpetrated and by whom, none has succeeded because no one has been able to find and assemble all the vital parts of the jig-saw puzzle. Personally, while I cannot pretend to have recovered all the missing fragments, it is my hope that the few which purposeful research and hard thinking have yielded me will, when properly adjusted, enable the onlooker to arrive at an accurate perception of the main characteristics of the picture.

Ideas—whence come they? The forces which move the world are cryptic in their working, often sending out their impulsions tortuously and from afar. Hence, while it is comparatively easy for the industrious stage historian to arrive at results, it is a difficult matter to divine causes. Here, we have in a nutshell the reason why the genesis of a change which came over the spirit of the theatre shortly af-

ter *Macbeth* was written has never been thoroughly grasped. Yet, it is vital we should know the whole truth, for the change was to create a vitiation of the existing tragic scheme not to be eliminated by the end of the century.

It is curious, not to say painful, to note how Ben Jonson's enlargement, in 1608, of the formula of the court masque, by his apt devisal of the antimasque, gave birth to a mischievous stage convention which he himself was compelled to deprecate. Just as the elemental masque, with all its fine poetic possibilities, was, fundamentally, nothing more than a mere prelude to the series of grave and stately dances with which it terminated, so, too, its foil, the antimasque, with all its fantastic and macabre possibilities, was but the engaging means to a delightful end, and that end the grotesque dance in which it culminated. But, mark the distinction: whereas none but those of the bluest blood took part in the final dancing, none but professional players (at least in Jacobean days) took part in the antimasque. One, indeed, may speak, and it is essential that one should speak, more specifically; by right of being his Majesty's Servants, the Globe players had for long a monopoly at court of antimasque acting and dancing.

Among the populace, curiosity was avid for a glimpse of the splendours of the Christmas and Shrovetide masques at Whitehall, but, much as

the citizens' wives intrigued for places—sometimes to their own undoing—it was a curiosity that got little gratification. What more natural than for the Globe players to take advantage of this craving, and to cater to it by systematically introducing into their plays, both new and old, the antimasque dances they had been giving? All would have been well had they but exercised some discrimination: there were many plays in their repertory which interpolations of this kind could not injure. For good or ill, however, the thing soon became a convention. One traces, for example, a transference from Ben Jonson's *Masque of Oberon* in the Dance of Satyrs in *The Winter's Tale*. It was just at that time the voice of protest began to be heard, but went unheeded. We find Field, in his lines 'to his worthy and beloved friend, Master Ben Jonson, on his *Catiline*,' prefixed to that unfortunate play, lamenting:

> 'But in this age where jigs and dances move,
> How few there are that this pure work approve.'[13]

Field must not be accused of indulging here in pleonasm, any more than Jonson later. Be it noted that a jig in its common contemporary sense implied, not a dance, but a song in dialogue. From that standpoint, 'Come away' in *Macbeth* was a jig. A year later, in his 'Address to the Reader' in *The Alchemist*, Jonson himself deplored the vogue in plays of 'jigges and daunces[14]'; and in 1614, he

deemed it requisite to gird publicly at the prevailing taste. In the induction to *Bartholomew Fair*, the Stage Keeper, in speaking of the author, is made to say:

'He is loth to make Nature afraid in his plays, like those that beget Tales, Tempests, and such like Drolleries, to mix his head with other men's heels; let the concupiscence of jigs and dances reign as strong as it will amongst you.'

Jonson had reasonably good grounds for returning to the assault. The King's Men were still at their old tricks. Not so very many moons before, they had transferred the antimasque of the Twelve Frantics in Campion's *The Lord's Masque* to the fourth act of *The Duchess of Malfi*, and had appropriated most of the features of the grotesquely charactered May Dance in Beaumont's *Masque of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn* in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. It may be that the authors of the two new plays shared Jonson's dislike for these interpolations, but they had little choice in the matter. Those who paid the piper called the tune.

It needs now to hark back a little. Viewing these facts, it may safely be inferred that no early court antimasque of any notability would have escaped appropriation at the hands of the King's Players. Undoubtedly, the first to which the description fully applies was the Antimasque of Witches, one of the prime features of Jonson's *Masque of Queens*, when given at Whitehall on

February 2nd, 1609. Of the success of this, backgrounded as it was by a lurid Hell scene of Inigo Jones's imagining, there can be no question. Elaborate charms and incantations were performed, and the twelve uncanny hags, marshalled by 'the Dame,' delighted the distinguished assembly with two weird dances, the second of which, a fitting finale to the scene, was 'full of preposterous change and gesticulation,' contrary in every way to human habitude, being executed, as Jonson tells us, 'back to back, and hip to hip, their hands joined, and making circles backward, to the left hand, with strange fantastic motions of their heads and bodies.' It is interesting to note that the music specially composed for the two dances by Giles and Herne is still extant, forming part of a unique collection of instrumental masque music now in the British Museum.[15]

Assuming in accord with the whole mass of evidence that sundry members of the King's Company were the exponents of this antimasque, one can conceive of no difficulty serious enough to bar the way to a public repetition of its dances, once the idea had been entertained. It was not even beyond the power of the players to obtain the use of the fantastically elaborate dresses they had originally worn. All the court masquing attire was in the custody of the Yeoman of the Revels (otherwise known as 'The Keeper of the Vestures') and, time out of mind, it had been customary for the

holder of that office to supplement his modest stipend by letting out dresses on hire.[16] Moreover, it is not unlikely that the King's Men were on good terms with the particular Yeoman of the hour, since he happened to be no less a person than Edward Kirkham, a former co-manager of the Blackfriars Theatre. It should also be borne in mind that in 1609 the Revels Office and Wardrobe were situated in Whitefriars, hard by that distinguished private playhouse, which, by the way, the King's Men had just taken over.

Circumstances militated for long against public reproduction of the Witch Dances. Theatrical affairs were in a transitional state, and things generally were in a bad way. Plague had occasioned the closing of the playhouses in July, 1608, and, save for a few days at Christmas, acting was not permitted again till late in the November of the following year. It was at this period that Shakespeare evidently retired for good to Stratford on Avon, thenceforth only taking occasional trips to town to bring his old associates a new play and to receive from them his dividends as 'house-keeper.'[17]

In pursuit of their project of transferring some of the main features of Jonson's antimasque to the regular boards, the King's Men were confronted by only one difficulty. The dances were not of a nature that permitted of their introduction into any or every play, and it became apparent that nothing short of a new piece with a wholly suitable

milieu could extricate them from their predicament. Few dramatists could have been more anxious for commissions at this grave moment than Thomas Middleton, since it was imperative for him to break new ground. With the collapse of the two companies of boy-players, he could no longer till the old fields. Theatrical affairs being at a standstill, there was no opportunity of pick and choice, and, girding up his loins, Middleton thankfully accepted the King's Men's commission. Faced with the task of painting in a background thoroughly harmonious with Jonson's hags, he had perforce to shelve his naturalistic predilections, so long exercised to advantage in his pictures of contemporary London life, and to set about writing his first romantic play. It by no means surprises that the result was not wholly satisfying. By dint of amalgamating a high-flown tale of Belleforest with a tale of wizardry told in Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, Middleton succeeded in moulding his tragi-comedy of *The Witch*, a composition marked by much fluent versification and some flickering imaginativeness, but seriously lacking in organic quality. The severity of the task lay in the circumstance that, while basing on Jonson, he had to avoid imitating him. Exerting all his powers with the hope of reconciling some many disparate elements, he changed the sex of Scot's wizards, gave them a common instead of a divided interest, and, after re-naming

Jonson's Dame Hecate, placed them all under her control. There is little, indeed, in the witch scenes that can be properly called his, nothing perhaps but the two songs (or jigs, as rare old Ben would have styled them), 'Come Away' and 'Black Spirits and White,' in which, as Arthur Symons has well said, 'there is not only a ghastly fancy awake, but something nearer to a fine lyric cadence than he ever caught before or since.'

Jonson's masque was published immediately after its performance, and, now in the dialogue and now in the stage directions, Middleton's play betrays its influence. Jonson's couplet:

> Yet went I back to the house again,
> Kill'd the black cat, and here's the brain,

has its echo in Middleton's 'the whorson old bell-cat would have given me the brain of a cat in my handkercher.'[18] Again, the spirit that summons the witches at the opening of 'Come Away' is the 'little Martin' of Jonson's third charm, 'he that calls them to their conventicles.' As a matter of fact, the whole concerted piece was directly inspired by a speech of one of the masque-witches:

> Sisters, stay, we want our Dame;
> Call upon her by her name,
> And the charm we used to say,
> *That she quickly anoint, and come away.*

Moreover, the curious direction in Act I, sc. 2, of Middleton's play, 'Enter Heccat, and other

witches (with properties and habits fitting)', warrants us in assuming that Middleton's hags wore the identical dresses of the hags in the masque, since it recalls Jonson's description wherein we are told that his witches were 'all differently attired; some with rats on their heads, some on their shoulders, others with ointment pots at their girdles; all with spindles, timbrels, rattles, or other venefical instruments, making a confused noise, with strange gestures.' Finally, to make the inspiring cause of *The Witch* more assured, it is only necessary to add that, like *The Masque of Queens*, it had two witch dances, but danced by six executants, not twelve, as in the original. Bear in mind these six witches: they will help us very materially to read the riddle of *Macbeth*.

With the renewal of acting in December, 1608, the King's Men took possession of the Blackfriars, and, in all probability, opened there with *The Witch*. That the play, whenever produced, proved a failure is certain. It remained unprinted until 1778, when Isaac Reed had a few copies struck off for private circulation from an old transcript now in the Bodleian. Inscribed on the front of this is 'A Tragi-Coomodie called the Witch, long since acted by his Ma^ties. seruants at the Blackfriars. Written by Tho. Middleton.' Here, the 'long since' is of vital import: it nullifies the commonly accepted hypothesis that the play, so far from belonging to its author's middle

period, was one of his latest works. Moreover, the transcript was certainly made in Middleton's life-time. Commissioned by him, it was the work of a scrivener[19] and expressly made for presentation to his friend, Thomas Holmes, to whom it bears a revealing dedication, evidently a private tribute, not intended for the public eye. From it we learn that Middleton, on Holmes's urging, had recovered from the players the manuscript of what he significantly styles 'this ignorantly ill-fated labour of mine.'

Evidently *The Witch* got so short a shrift that the King's Men bethought them of making the most of its unstaled 'jigges and daunces.' There is good reason to believe that not long afterwards they commissioned Middleton or another to tinker at the text of *Macbeth* for their better introduction into that tragedy. In justice to the players, something requires to be said in mitigation of that offence, though, personally, I am loth to say it. To begin with, the custom of the times might be pleaded. It had become usual on the revival of an old play to revise it, as much to impart to the text the air of novelty as to amend any existing deficiencies. Sometimes, the very title was altered. Moreover, there was a class of alterations which was imperative. Before a play could be given at court, it had to be rehearsed and revised under the superintendence of the Master of the Revels or his deputy, and, in many cases, some spectacular

feature added. It was to this imposition we owe the disturbing lyrico-allegorical infiltrations in *Old Fortunatus*, the indifferent, hastily written masque in *The Tempest*, and, most likely, the disfiguring vision scene in *Cymbeline*. When texts were not sacred at the court, they could hardly have been deemed sacred in the playhouse. No doubt, while Shakespeare remained in full activity, he made the alterations deemed necessary, according to the occasion, in his own plays, but his texts bear evidence of subsequent sophistication. It is scarcely feasible to suppose that the corruption of *Macbeth* took place before his retirement into the country, and the circumstances, as they have been outlined, point to the opening of 1610 as the period of misfortune.

There is good reason to believe that, after the failure of *The Witch*, Middleton was engaged for a time in revising the King's Men's plays, and that his is the second hand to be detected in *Macbeth* and *Timon of Athens*.[20] Unless, indeed, we take this view, there are riddles propounded by both texts which must remain unread: Middleton's hand in *Macbeth* is betrayed in ways. In his *Blurt, Master Constable*, a Paul's play, registered on June 7th, 1602, we get in II, 1, 104:

> And when the lamb, bleating, doth bid good night
> Unto the closing day, then tears begin
> To keep quick time unto the owl, whose voice
> Shrieks like the bellman in the lovers' ears.

Compare with this *Macbeth*, II, 2, 3:

> It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman
> Which gives the stern'st good night.

Now, which view is the more rational, that Middleton here repeated himself, or that Shakespeare stole from Middleton?

Then again, Dyce[21] draws attention to one of Middleton's distinguishing characteristics, viz., that in introducing a couplet he 'does not always think it necessary that the first line should consist of as many feet as the second'; and Mr. H. Dugdale Sykes points out[22] that quite a number of these irregular couplets are to be found in *Timon of Athens*. I find one in *Macbeth* at the close of a scene (I, 2):

> *Ross.* I'll see it done.
> *Duncan.* What he hath lost noble Macbeth hath won.

The case, however, for the intrusion of Middleton has been so well argued from a metrical standpoint by Mr. David Laurance Chambers[23] that I need do no more than cite briefly from him here:

> The speeches of the three weird sisters (I, 1, 1-7, 11-2; I, 3, 8-37; IV, 1, 4-38, 64-68, 110-11) are prevailingly tetrameter with a trochaic cadence, the rhythm which Shakespeare almost always, if not always, adopts in songs and in lyrical passages hardly to be told from songs. . . . The fact that the speeches of Hecate and the First Witch (III, 5, 4-33; IV, 1, 39-43, 125-132), are in iambic

measures creates, I think, a strong presumption against their Shakespearean authorship. With the other arguments impugning the genuineness of these speeches—their superfluous and incongruous character, etc.—we are not here concerned. . . . What is more, the metre of these speeches of Hecate—dull, mechanical, regular, touched with favour and prettiness—is in striking and almost amusing contrast with the grotesqueness, the freedom, the bold roughness of the colloquies and incantations of the weird sisters."[24]

Mr. Chambers then goes on to show that Middleton was fond of the iambic tetrameter, and quotes examples from several of his plays.

It is extraordinary that there should still be scholars who resolutely refuse to face the facts and pin their faith to the old fallacy that Middleton appropriated 'Come Away' and 'Black Spirits and White' from *Macbeth*. One should have thought that Fleay, long ago, had laid that ghost for ever.[25] That 'Come Away' was written originally for *The Witch* is shown by the fact that the names of the minor witches mentioned in it are taken from Scot, upon whom Middleton certainly based, and occur otherwise in the play.[26] To argue that the concerted piece was Shakespeare's would be to argue that Middleton had written his whole play around it, which we know to be untrue.

How comes it that, despite sophistication, all the great scenes in *Macbeth* remain unimpaired? Does it not appear as if the reviser had given most

of his attention to the task of neatly incorporating with the text all the vocal and choregraphic features of *The Witch*? It is in Act III, sc. 5 and Act IV, sc. 1, that his hand can most readily be detected, and in the latter-mentioned scene, one can actually watch him at his work. Purposefully, he writes down, 'Enter Heccat, and the other three witches,' little recking that a long line of commentators is to take this necessary stage direction as a blunder. The truth is that the additional three witches go to make up the requisite complement, otherwise the six of Middleton's play, whose original representatives, it can hardly be doubted, were pressed into service for the purposes of the dancing. This increase in number reveals so exact a parallelism that it is not alone trumpet-tongued in regard to the source, but indicates that the transference was made without material delay. In other words, the acceptance of my hypothesis involves the dating of *Macbeth*, in the form in which it has been preserved for us, not later than 1610. And what do we find? By a satisfying coincidence, Dr. Simon Forman records a visit of his to the Globe in April, 1610, to see that very play.

SHAKESPEARE'S LOST CHARACTERS

THERE are many paths to knowledge, but all pass through the grim Valley of Disillusion. Once upon a time there was a sorrowful, foot-weary man who, after traversing its stony course, knelt down and prayed, 'O God, in Thy mercy, preserve me from my friends, and I'll take charge of my enemies.' Of a surety, it would have been to the inestimable advantage of posterity had Shakespeare had prescience enough to make that appeal, assuming that it would have been hearkened unto, seeing that, of all the traitors to his cause, the first and worst were those who stood around his throne. How mean and contemptible their attitude now appears! To think that these trusted Globe players, who, ironically enough, live only in the reflected light of Shakespeare's genius, should after prospering so long through his labours, have had so poor a conception of the value and the sacredness of his writ as to debase his golden images with feet of clay! And all through a blind following of a senseless playhouse custom!

The misfortune was that the temper of the times kept the Elizabethan drama in a perpetual state of flux. It was seldom that even a much-acclaimed masterpiece was allowed to solidify. To

let well alone was, to the players, a wholly repugnant principle. Whether or not it called for amendment—and the mere fact of survival argues broadly against the necessity—a play about to be reintroduced to public notice after having lain a few years on the shelf was usually placed in the hands of some more or less expert theatrical cobbler for alteration and repairs. One should have thought that the author himself, if living, might have been asked to do the job, but it would appear that the players got out of the habit of giving him the commission owing to his sensible protestations over the spoiling of good work. The truly unfortunate part of the affair was that they were in a position to ignore his wishes, since, once he had made his market and got his money, he had no further control over the creations of his brain.

What happened to the poor, defenceless play once it fell into the remorseless hands of the play-patcher largely depended on the circumstances of the moment. Sometimes it was thought to be too long, sometimes too short ; it might present a perplexing profusion of minor characters such as, even with bounteous 'doubling'—and 'doubling' was then a common practice—would prove beyond the capabilities of the company. Now and again, sheer caprice held sway, and all sorts of mysterious things happened. Occasionally, as the first and second quartos of *Philaster* demonstrate, the play was given an entirely different ending. With the

cutting and slashing and piecing, minor characters frequently disappeared, but seldom without leaving some faint trace of their former existence.

Stageright in olden times being mere matter of courtesy, it was not the practice in Shakespeare's day for publication to follow close on performance. Hence, the curse of the mania for revision was that many an original manuscript of a sterling play disappeared for good before the play reached the printer's hands. That is the secret of most of the imperfections and inconsistencies in Shakespeare. Several of his plays have come down to us in their ultimate—and therefore painfully sophisticated—form. Not that the Master did not indulge in some revision of his own work in the earlier days of his creative activity. Nor is it for us to complain on that score: it is the duty of the father to correct the child. But the tinkering at Shakespeare's texts which took place in the years immediately following his retirement to Stratford—that is another pair of shoes.

Here and there we find traces in the works of the Supreme Dramatist of minor characters whose fate it was to fret and strut their brief hour and then be heard no more. It may be that this slaughter of the innocents was considerably greater than we have the means now of estimating; it was the business of the reviser to cover up his tracks, and he generally knew his business. Now and again, however, in working on an old prompt-book, he,

by some oversight, would omit to delete or alter a criminatory textual allusion or a less criminatory stage direction. (The latter, of course, told the audience nothing: its revelations were for posterity.) Whenever we find a named character which does not otherwise take part in the play, and whenever we find characters familiarly referred to but never appearing, in all such cases we may rest pretty certain that the pruning knife has been vigorously exercised.

Revision of *The Taming of the Shrew* by a second hand is proved by an ugly oversight. Amid the hurly-burly of his noisy, well stage-managed home-coming, Petruchio sends for 'his cousin Ferdinand,' explaining in an aside to his wearied lady that he is 'one, Kate, that you must kiss and be acquainted with.' But, whatever happened in her early days, the poor shrew, in her later stage life, never got that kiss. Ferdinand not only fails to materialize, but he sends no apology for his remissness. We are left to assume that he had gone off in spontaneous combustion while Petruchio was engaged on his unconventional wooing.[27]

So, too, in that much-altered play, *The Tempest*, we learn that Antonio's son was in the magically assailed vessel, and must, of course, have landed with the others, seeing that Prospero, after giving them the fright of their lives, took care that nobody should be injured by the storm. Yet, wonderful to say, we see nothing of him.

Less accusative, though equally revealing to those capable of reading the portents, is the evidence to be found scattered here and there in disregarded stage directions. The fact that Antenor, in *Troilus and Cressida*, comes on the stage, in all, three times, and on no occasion condescends to open his mouth, is fairly good proof that, whatever his earlier office, in the later version of the play, he had absolutely no place. To admit as much, however, is likewise to concede that Pandarus's description of him in the first act must also have gone by the board; otherwise we have the absurdity of a character being distinguished as 'a shrewd wit' and demonstrating his expertness of tongue by his silence. If Antenor really remained, he must have been the enviable possessor of a most sagacious nod, a quality that made him lineal ancestor of Burleigh in *The Critic*. But, so far from being able to take that reading, one has the uneasy suspicion that with the quenching of Antenor's sparks of wit, the world has lost the purge that that 'shrewd fellow' Shakespeare gave to Ben Jonson, to the bewraying of his credit.

When *Much Ado About Nothing* was first presented, Hero had a visible mother whose name was Innogen, but the poor lady was fated to have an untimely end. The curious will seek vainly in modern editions of the play for any trace of her, but in the first quarto there are clear indications of her brief existence. At the beginning of the first

act, and again at the beginning of the second, she comes on with the other characters, only to remain on both occasions—O rare woman!—as mute as an oyster. Which means that already, in the year of grace, 1600, she was reckoned among the things Time crams ruthlessly into his wallet.

Shakespeare, doubtless derived the name Innogen from the old play of *Locrine*, wherein it is mentioned as that of Brutus's wife, one of those exasperating people who are much talked of in plays but disappoint expectation by never putting in an appearance. Evidently it was much the same with him as it was with the old lady who found so much comfort in the word, Mesopotamia, for, when forced by hard circumstance to consign Hero's mother to an early grave, he treasured her name in his memory, and, when he came to write *Cymbeline*, bestowed it on that gracious lady who showed that discrimination was one of the qualities of her royal blood by choosing an eagle and eschewing a puttock. The proof of this is that Simon Forman, the astrologer, in describing the play in his diary after seeing one of its early performances, speaks of the much-tried heroine as 'Innogen.' How the slight alteration came to be made subsequently in the name, whether by accident or design, must remain a problem. For once, the printer must be given the benefit of the doubt. Though the players of Shakespeare's day were not at all given to the latterday vice of mumbling,

always speaking *ore rotondo*, one should be disposed to think that Forman's ears had deceived him, were it not for the circumstance that an analagous transference is to be found elsewhere in the poet's works.

In *All's Well That Ends Well* there was originally a character called Violenta, which, under subsequent revision of the text, disappeared from the play. A modest tombstone to her memory will be found in the opening direction of Act III, sc. 5. But, rising superior to the theosophists of the present hour who only preach reincarnation, Shakespeare practised it. Violenta eventually had rebirth in *Twelfth Night*, though, at long last, she was to become known to fame as Viola. Why some inconsiderate reviser should have so callously shorn her of a syllable is one of those things which, as Lord Dundreary would say, 'no fella can understand.' What we do know is that the miscreant left his muddy footprints behind him. He forgot to erase the 'Enter Violenta' which stares at us from Act I, sc. 5 of the Folio, our only authority, as ill-luck ordained it, for the text.

One finds, by the way, other curious traces of his tinkering. In Shakespeare's day, when programmes, like the child souls in *The Blue Bird*, were awaiting to be ushered into the world, it was essential for the proper understanding of the play that a character on first coming on should either name himself (as Security is to be found

doing in *Eastward Hoe*), or be addressed with his full style and title by another. Yet, in *Twelfth Night*, as we have it, Viola remains in the ranks of the anonymous—or perhaps one should say of the pseudonymous—almost to the end of the play.

Evidently, had the principle of life assurance been known and practised in Shakespeare's day, no insurance company would have viewed any of these minor dramatic characters as an average risk. Their calling would have been scheduled among hazardous occupations. That, however, is no reason why scholarship should have made so much pother over these disappearances. To read a very simple riddle, it has bustled upstairs, downstairs and into my lady's chamber, everywhere in fact except into the playhouse. It is a painful spectacle to watch Dr. Ernest Hunter Wright tying himself into a double knot in the endeavour to explain how it was that the Mercer in the opening scene of *Timon of Athens*, contrived to come on with the poet, painter, jeweller and merchant without being seen by the audience.[28] No doubt that worthy tradesman had borrowed Henslowe's 'robe for to goo invisebell.'

Not all revisers, however, were remiss, and there is good reason to believe that more unpretending folk have dropped out of Shakespeare's pageant than those whose former presence in the procession can be traced. Much as it has been maltreated, the text of *Measure for Measure* yields us

absolutely no clue to character-elimination, but the fact that Vincentio is to be found figuring in the Folio in 'The Names of the Actors,' and not at all in the play, shows the skill that was sometimes practised in the knifing and the astuteness in getting rid of the remains.

A NEW SHAKESPEAREAN TEST

WE have good reason to rejoice over the establishment and digestion of the remarkable number of important new facts evoked by the scientific investigation, so diligently pursued by the scholars of two continents for a score of years past, of the physical conditions of the old platform stage and the dramaturgic laws to which they gave rise. If only because of the readjustment it has brought about of the prescribed attitude towards the entire corpus of Elizabethan drama—an attitude of mild contempt tempered by a narrow admiration—this work, so long looked at askance as mere idle antiquarianism—has triumphantly vindicated itself. Order has been evolved out of seeming chaos. It has at last dawned upon us that dramaturgy actually existed in Shakespeare's day, a dramaturgy, with all its faults, more individual and more racial than that which rules on the English stage of to-day; and, rebuked by this knowledge, we are ceasing to judge the seventeenth-century playwright by our standards and beginning to rank him by his own. We see now that it is not a question of inferior and superior techniques, but simply of techniques fundamentally different and operating on different planes.

Sanity is returning. Even Shakespearolatry itself under pressure of the new knowledge is suffering a sea-change. The rare and radiant genius of the clarion-voiced broadcaster of the eternal verities no longer appears unrelated, phenomenal, anarchic; although striding along by himself, he goes with the crowd, keeps step with the same music. We recognize now that he was the product of his environment, none the less the common denominator of his time because he rose superior to it; and some day we shall perchance cease to view him as that hopeless, unaspiring thing called a god, and see in him that entity of infinitely greater potentialities—a Man. When that day comes no one will dispute the patent fact that Shakespeare the player was Shakespeare the poet any more than he would question the capacity of a hen to rear a duckling because the duckling is of another species and has powers denied to the hen.

Assuredly we have not penetrated as yet much beyond the vestibule of our knowledge to be of the great Elizabethan age. Manifold are the possibilities of scientific investigation. If, like Glauber, we go undaunted on our way, seeking the philosopher's stone, we shall probably be rewarded by finding something as useful as Glauber's salts. Thus it is that it has been given to me, after many castings of a wide drag-net into Elizabethan waters, to land a catch. While pursuing a pleasant

study of platform-stage music—more perhaps of its methods of employment than of the music itself—I stumbled across certain curious facts, which, besides a wider utility to the early stage historian, prove on examination to constitute a new Shakespearean test. Since there is nothing more disturbing to the archæological mind than to be kept re-adjusting its historical perspective, I am thankful to say that my find is not gravely revolutionary. Narrow in its Shakespearean application, it has bearing only on the accepted chronology of divers of the plays first published in the Folio. Within that limitation, it enables us to verify or discard existing theories, and to establish the earliest possible date for the stage use of these particular texts. The test itself lies in the mention of certain musical instruments in directions for incidental music, and demonstration of its validity calls for some discussion of the nice distinctions of early playhouse routine.

Emphasis must be laid at the outset on the dividing line between the two kinds of theatres flourishing in Shakespeare's prime. These were known distinctively as the public and the private, but since both were equally public in the latter-day sense, they will be better identified now as the common and the select. Architecturally, artistically, and economically, they were widely disparate. Fundamentally, however, the difference was one of prices of admission. The select theatre charged

more and gave more. Its fare was less homely, and the comfort in which it was enjoyed much greater. Its frequenters were protected from the elements; in the open-roofed public theatre the groundlings often suffered from the pelting rain. Smaller in dimension, the so-called private house had some of the qualities of the *théâtre intime*: there, the broad or noisy effect jarred. Excessive robustiousness, however, was precluded by the fact that, during the first thirty years of its history, its occupancy remained the prerogative of boy-players. It is marvellous how the weakness of these little eyases eventually proved to be their strength. Devoid of passion and power, unable to try a fall with their mature rivals on their own ground, they made skilful resort to the intellectual charm of artificial comedy, excelled in the rapier-play of neatly turned dialectics, risked the dangers of juggling with the gleaming knives and flaming torches of personal caricature, and above all, availed of their training as church-choristers to exert an irresistible attractiveness by the superior beauty of their music and song.

In the early select theatre, since the audience was fastidious and the house small, everything tending to create excessive noise was carefully eliminated. Hence, not only do we remark the avoidance of certain kinds of plays, but striking differences from common-theatre routine in the methods of performance. It is easy to divine why

the Chronicle History, with its alarums and excursions, its drumming and trumpeting, had no place in the boys' repertory. We know from an alternative instruction in one of William Percy's quaint manuscript plays[29] that the firing of chambers—perhaps the most popular of Bankside stage effects, and, because of that popularity, destined to prove disastrous to Shakespeare's Globe—would have been viewed as a rank offence by a select-theatre audience at the dawn of the new century. It was due to this sensitiveness that the boy-players sedulously avoided the use of trumpets in the course of stage action. That, no doubt, was a remarkable abstention, viewing the gratefulness of trumpet flourishing as an aid to stage illusion, and the frequency with which it was resorted to elsewhere. It was not as if there had been powerful precedent: there was no taboo of the trumpet at court performances. But, as it happened, its employment in the private theatre could be evaded without difficulty. One must needs recall that, both on the stage and off, the trumpet in those days was nothing more than a military and ceremonial instrument. It was not until means were devised in Purcell's closing years of mitigating its blaring and correcting its out-of-tuneness that it became possible to use it for vocal accompaniment or as an orchestral constituent. In the select theatre, thanks to the eschewal of the Chronicle Play, there was little call for it save in the necessary heralding of royal approaches and de-

partures, soundings which, it was found, could be otherwise conveyed. In a word, where trumpets were demanded, the boy-players substituted cornets.

To the latter-day mind this will appear a distinction without any particular difference: none but musical antiquaries really know how little resemblance exists between the sixteenth-century cornet (or zinke) and the instrument that now bears its name. Ranking in the category of wood-wind, the old cornet, so far from possessing trumpet-like tones, was merely used as a substitute because it was ready to hand, the boys being accustomed to sing to it. It has been graphically described as 'a kind of flute with a tone larger and coarser than that of the oboe.' Commonly it was a horn-shaped, leather-covered, wooden instrument with finger-and-thumb holes after the manner of the recorder, and a cup mouthpiece. But there was also a straight cornet, known indifferently as still, mute or flat, which was milder in tone and generally resorted to for playing in a minor key. A set or 'nest' of cornets (as the phrase went) consisted of three, the High Treble, with a compass of two octaves from D^1, the Ordinary, a fifth lower, and the Great Cornet, an octave lower in pitch.

If the boy-players shunned the trumpet, there was equally good reason for the shunning of the cornet by their adult rivals. To the musician it was the bow of Ulysses: unless played well it sounded badly. In the select theatre, the musician and the

actor were identical, the boys having all received a careful musical training; in the common theatres, where few of the men-players had sound musical knowledge, the offices were kept separate. Since luxury of music in the Shoreditch and Bankside houses would have meant a serious extra expense without a corresponding return, the men made no attempt to compete with the boys on lines where their superiority was incontestable. In the select theatre the play was an excuse for the music, but in the common theatre it had to stand on its merits. The men accustomed their public to certain musical abstentions, and did not even indulge it with music between the acts.

The boys made great use of a considerable variety of musical instruments, including lutes, bandorins, viols, cornets, regals, and recorders. Of the regals and cornets they had practically a stage monopoly. Occasionally, in the act-intervals, they were played together, but, as a rule, the cornets were heard alone. And, as much because of their prime adaptability as of their likableness, they were heard frequently. Some illustration of their employment in three of the early select theatres will serve to indicate their gratefulness. In several of Marston's plays, the substitution of cornets for trumpets is very marked, especially in *Antonio and Mellida*, a Paul's play of 1601. In this, just as the action is about to begin, 'the cornets sound a battle,' and all through the first act they are kept busy executing

sennets and flourishes. In the same author's *The Wonder of Women, or the Tragedie of Sophonisba*, a slightly later Blackfriars production, they were perpetually in evidence and fulfilled a multiplicity of offices. We find them announcing the arrival and departure of the prologue, beguiling the time (in conjunction with the regals) in the first interval, accompanying the boys when they sing and when they dance, bringing the play to a close with a flourish. In an earlier Blackfriars play of Marston's, *The Malcontent*, where their employment is equally various, they are to be noted at one juncture doing duty for hunting horns.[30] Letting another year or two elapse and turning to another theatre, the ill-fated Whitefriars, we find the cornets in 1607 in *The Dumb Knight* still doing duty for the trumpets, and, in this case, doing little else. But here, as elsewhere, there was no pretence at imitation: the idea was simply to suggest by substitution. Florio could openly command, 'Sound cornets, princes respect your guards.' There is equal straight-forwardness in *The Malcontent*.

In the solution of a problem arising out of this differentiation lies the new Shakespearean test. The point is this. No extant common-theatre play of the period anterior to the second decade of the seventeenth century presents any slightest indication of the use of cornets by the adult players, and no select-theatre play of the same period gives any clue to the theatrical use of trumpets by the boys.

Subsequently, however, we find both kinds of instruments employed occasionally in the one play, sometimes separately, but more often in conjunction. What is the secret of this change?

The explanation does not wholly lie in the tendency towards standardization in matters of theatrical routine, since there was no complete standardization while the platform-stage lasted. Other factors came into play. The private theatre, as originally constituted, had within it the germs of its own inevitable dissolution. It was diametrically opposed to fundamental principles. The theatre is essentially a socialistic institution and depends for its permanence on its universality of appeal. Sooner or later exclusiveness makes for preciosity, that fen-fire whose fleeting gleams are but the phosphorescence of decay. The children's playhouse could not avoid this danger, but it survived it through possessing in its music and song an antiseptic which put off the evil day. Even as it was, spice had to be found at all costs for the jaded palate. Resort was made to topicalities seasoned with outrageous personal caricature, what, in medical jargon, would be called a heroic remedy: it only served to precipitate the end.

Though a few details are vital, it is unnecessary now to give a full account of the collapse. Within a period of twelve months, in 1607-1608, a curious combination of circumstances brought about the dissolution of the three existing children-companies. Over-supply (spelling diminished profits), grave

personal offence to those occupying the seats of the mighty, and the severities of the plague—all played their part in the general downfall. It is hardly conceivable that the Blackfriars boys had ridden for a fall, but it is certain that they had foolhardily essayed to take an impossible fence. Silenced in the spring of 1608 for audaciously satirizing both king and court, but the king especially, they went into voluntary liquidation shortly after. In August, while plague of more than ordinary virulence was raging—it was to last another fourteen months, much to the discomfiture of the players—the lease of the Blackfriars was surrendered to Burbage, who made it over to the Globe sharers. Consequently, what was experienced late in November, 1609, when theatrical activities were at last renewed, might almost be characterized as epoch-marking. Doubtless that would be exaggerated language to apply to the King's Men's occupation of the Blackfriars, though it meant the first appearance of a troupe of common players in a select theatre.

It was then that standardization of methods first set in; but though some uniformity was at once attained, wholesale revolution was checked by the trend of events. Armed with a new patent, Philip Rosseter, the court lutenist and composer, resuscitated the Children of the Queen's Revels for a few years at the Whitefriars, and with them the old select-theatre principles. The opposition thus set up to the King's Men was not of any particular

gravity, but it served to prevent any material diminution of the old provision of music and song. But there were curious compromises: for one thing, though the familiar cornets were still retained, the men brought over their trumpets from the Bankside. So rigorously was the pristine musical standard of the Blackfriars maintained that Whitelock, in writing in after years of 'the Blackefryars Musicke,' as he knew them in 1634, says they 'were then esteemed the best of common musitians in London.'[31]

If we seek evidence of the persistence of cornet-playing in the select theatres, we shall find it in Charles Fitzjeffrey's '*Certain Elegies*,' published in 1620, in 'The Third Booke of Humours: intituled *Notes from Blackfriars*.' This quaint poem describes the assembling of a typical Blackfriars audience. Notable in the motley procession is an affected creature, a sort of Miss Nancy, much in demand among the ladies for his skill in dancing jigs and galliards. He pretends to despise the only accomplishment he possesses:

> Yet marke! No sooner shall the Cornets blow
> But ye shall have him skipping to and fro.

It is a nice question, a question having important bearing on the matter in hand, whether musical supply and musical routine at the Globe were in anywise affected by its interlinkment with the Blackfriars. Since the King's Men made the latter

their winter resort and returned to the Bankside in the summer, there is just a possibility that little by little the Globe became influenced by the higher musical standard of the Blackfriars and the great prominence given there to music and song. But it is a possibility and nothing more: no positive evidence exists to give weight to the likelihood. With the foothold so uncertain it will, I fear, be deemed an impertinence for me to express an opinion; but, fortified by intuitional assurance, I take my courage in both hands. Viewing the conditions, it is seriously to be doubted if standardization of musical supply and musical routine were effected at the two theatres. Uniformity on all lines would have meant uniformity in the prices of admission, and we know that the King's Men maintained the old, superior rates at the Blackfriars.[32] To continue to charge more meant continuing to give more. It must be remembered also that control of this matter lay in the hands of the chief players, and not of the capitalists of the concern. It was they who paid the musicians,[33] and, as their profits were less at the Globe, there was need to economize. Since these considerations would operate against complete standardization, I am forced to believe that evidence of musical routine at the Blackfriars during the long period of its occupation by the King's men is not evidence for the Globe during the same period.[34]

All that can be seriously advanced against this inference I shall advance myself, but, leaving specu-

lation on one side for the time being, so as not to confuse the issue, it is vital to inquire what conclusions can be safely arrived at from the plain facts. According to my reasoning, they are two in number, and both valuable as tests:

(1) All play-texts specifically the property of the King's Men and indicating the employment of cornets must have been prepared for stage service after October, 1609.[35]

(2) All pre-Restoration texts whatsoever (whether of new and original or revised old plays) calling for the separate or concurrent employment of both cornets and trumpets must have been texts made for use after the autumn of 1609.

My first conclusion has particular bearing on the Folio text of *The Merchant of Venice*. The direct source of this version has hitherto been lacking, since it agrees wholly neither with Q1 nor Q2, though presenting similarities to both. Thanks to the new test, it can now be shown that the Folio reproduced a prompt copy made in the middle or perhaps late Jacobean period. The evidence lies in certain stage directions in the second act not to be found in either quarto. In the opening scene of that act the entry and exit of Morocco are marked, not by a flourish of trumpets (as they certainly would have been *circa* 1600), but by a flourish of cornets. Beyond doubt, in this particular version, the princely suitor's coming and going were always likewise distinguished, but it is to be noted that in

his second (or casket) scene the direction which should follow his departure has unaccountably lagged. We find the missing 'Flo. Cornets' after 'Enter Salarino and Solanio,' where, of a surety, it has no *raison d'être*, since only persons of exalted rank were honoured with trumpet- or cornet-heralding. It requires further to be remarked that although at a later juncture a cornet-flourish announces the approach of Arragon, the direction for his departure and the accompanying flourish is missing. It would appear from this—and other evidence to the same effect could be advanced—that the Folio reproduced recently made prompt copies when such were available: a conclusion which, viewing the great probability of revision by a foreign hand on revival, is rather disturbing to belief in the Folio's complete authenticity. Happily, *The Merchant of Venice* escaped serious maltreatment.

My second conclusion deals with two kinds of plays: (*a*) those in which, for some inexplicable reason, trumpets and cornets were indifferently resorted to for the execution of flourishes ;[36] those in which, for reasons which can sometimes be divined, trumpet flourishes were followed by cornet-flourishes, or the music of cornets.[37] In this connection, I may say that after a fairly exhaustive study of early dramatic texts pursued for a quarter of a century, I know only of five plays falling within either classification which cannot be de-

finitely recognized as the property of the King's Men. Opposite that there are at least three plays of the one or other order—*The Double Marriage*, *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*—which were King's Men's Blackfriars plays. All the facts point to the conclusion that these new methods of stage routine originated with the King's Men, and, being consistently maintained by them, eventually evoked imitation.

Of the Folio plays two, *All's Well that Ends Well* and *Coriolanus*, belong to class (*a*), and one, *Henry VIII*, to both classes. Examination of the evidence adds considerably to our knowledge concerning them and suggests the lines for future inquiry.

Regarding *All's Well that Ends Well*, what has been for long surmized, viz., that nothing better than a rehandling of the original has come down to us, can now be thoroughly substantiated. Sundry directions show that, so far from slavishly reproducing the early Globe text, the Folio derives its inspiration from the latest prompt copy. Not only have we in Act I (at the opening of sc. 2 in the later divided versions) 'Flourish Cornets. Enter the King of France with Letters and divers attendants,' but at the opening of the succeeding act the King's coming is again so heralded. Possibly the Duke of Florence's arrival and departure in Act III were distinguished in precisely the same way, but there is no certainty about the matter since the accompanying instruction in both cases is for an undefined 'flour-

ish.' Positive inconsistency, however, reveals itself in Act V, sc. 2, with Lafeu's comment, 'The King's coming, I know by his trumpets,' an undoubted relic of the original play. Here it might be argued (since a parallel case can be advanced) that the discrepancy was purely one of oversight in revision, and, that although a flourish was heard, it was not necessarily a trumpet-flourish. In that so-called Chapman tragedy, *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, a 'flourish of cornets' is given in Act III when the Emperor retires to rest, and at the close of the play trumpets are bidden to sound and proclaim Richard's accession to the throne, though the accompanying stage direction is missing. But, as in the case of *All's Well*, *Alphonsus* was an old play refurbished.[38] Although in the Blackfriars repertory in 1636, and played then before Queen Henrietta and the Elector Palatine, it probably dated back to the sixteenth century. To advance this argument seriously, however, would be to menace truth with plausibility. There are other plays in which revision cannot be suspected, notably *Coriolanus* and *The Thracian Wonder*, where the same discrepancy is to be found.

If there be validity in the new test, *Coriolanus* cannot have been produced before the end of November, 1609, and seems more likely to have seen the light a month or two later. In either case it would have been a Blackfriars production. It is noteworthy that, although distinctly of the drum-and-trumpet type of play, it presented a greater variety of incidental

music than any of the old Chronicle Histories. By adroit and persistent resort to this expedient a curious intensification of the martial atmosphere was arrived at. There was, indeed, a remarkable foreshadowing of modern melodramatic methods. The trumpets began to blare early in the first act, but it was not until the taking of the town in the seventh scene that the cornets began to flourish. In Act II, sc. 1, the trumpets sounded again three several times, after which, at the close of the scene, the cornets had another brief innings. The same order, with better balance, prevailed in sc. 3. Afterwards, though there was a considerable variety of music, including a united burst of trumpets and hautboys accompanied by the beating of drums, and a dead march, the cornets were heard only once again—in a flourish at the opening of the third act. One cannot discern the glimmer of a system here, yet, if analogies go for anything, system there must have been. The difficulty is to determine why cornets should have been provided solely (as it appears) for occasional flourishes when trumpets more fittingly could have done the work.

It needs no ghost from the grave to tell us that *Henry VIII* was written after 1609, and, on that score, my second conclusion is of little practical value.[39] But there is another point demanding consideration, a point which necessitates a close examination of the internal evidence and some little soaring into the regions of conjecture. What we have to ask

ourselves is: Have we solid reason to believe that *Henry VIII* was a brand-new play in June, 1613, at the time the Globe was burnt down during its performance there? This has been denied. Arising out of this question comes another for subsequent consideration: Have we any reason to suppose that the text of the play preserved in the Folio is not the original text?

Whether or not he was the first to combat the common opinion that the play was originally brought out at the Globe, Fleay was one of the earliest. Writing in his *Life and Work of Shakespeare*, he says:—

> The prologue shows that the extant play was performed as a new one at Blackfriars, for the price of entrance (?) a shilling, l. 12, and the address to 'the first and happiest hearers of the town,' l. 24, are only applicable to the 'private house' in Blackfriars; the entrance to the Globe was twopence, and the audience at this 'public house' a much lower class.

All this is so speciously put that it is only after one has duly pondered the prologue the fallacy comes to light. Since there are lines in it which could not fittingly have been addressed to a private-theatre audience, the points singled out by Fleay must be otherwise interpreted. The initial mistake is in taking a shilling to be a distinctive Blackfriars, or private-theatre, price. It was nothing of the kind: the allusion has equal application to the common theatres. For proof we have not to seek beyond

Webster's induction to the new version of *The Malcontent* played at the Globe in 1604, wherein we find the remark, 'I say, any man that hath wit may censure, if he sit in the twelve-penny room.' According to *The Gul's Hornbooke*, the twelve-penny room was as much resorted to by the gull as by the critic, and it is certainly to the gull rather than the critic that the gird in the prologue applies.

As for the contention that 'the first and happiest hearers of the town' could have reference to none other than the Blackfriars audience, it is not in accord with the evidence. There is no reason to doubt that in 1613 the Globe still maintained its position as the leading London theatre. Only two years earlier it had been registered as the premier house in the itinerary of Prince Otto of Hesse-Cassel.[40] But there is absolutely no need to labour the point, seeing that no scholar will now have the hardihood to pretend that the following passage from the prologue was addressed to a Blackfriars audience:

> Only they
> That come to hear a merry bawdy play,
> A noise of targets, or to see a fellow
> In a long motley coat guarded with yellow
> Will be deceiv'd.

The objection here is not alone that 'the fool and fight' were wholly uncharacteristic of select-theatre drama: there is distinct allusion to the homely taste of the Globe groundlings. Now that the gallants

were all for rapier-and-dagger play, the good old sword-and-buckler (or target) fighting had become out-moded; but it still remained the delight of the populace. We have evidence of this at a much later period. Although originally intended for the Blackfriars, Shirley's tragi-comedy, *The Doubtful Heir*, was first brought out at the Globe in June, 1640. The prologue warned the audience that the play had been designed for a different public and presented little appealing to its particular taste:

> No shows, no dance, and what you most delight in,
> Grave understanders, here's no target-fighting.

Assuming, then, that *Henry VIII* was originally produced at the Globe, have we any reason to believe that the original text has come down to us? I think not: all the evidence indicates the contrary. To begin with, the occasional directions for the use of cornets prove a serious stumbling block. Though their employment in the public theatres in all probability began at the Globe, we have no clear testimony of such employment before 1620, and then only at the Red Bull.[41] If resort had been made to them at both kinds of houses some considerable time before the appearance of the First Folio, it is surprising that we find no trace of their use in any other late Shakespearean play then first published.[42] (I recognize, of course, that many musical directions are missing: but the fact remains.) Shakespeare apart, it is seldom save in avouched select-

theatre plays one gets such full musical detail as in *Henry VIII.* And just here it is essential to give a partial summary of its incidental music, omitting nothing having the slightest bearing on our inquiry.

Cornets, not the conventional trumpet-flourish, herald the coming of the King in Act I, sc. 2. It is noteworthy, however, that when he enters later on with the masquers, hautboys usher him in, precisely the instruments employed when the Queen makes her appearance in the fourth act. In Act II, sc. 4, the scene opens with, 'Trumpet, Sennet, and Cornets,' a sequence indicating a prolonged heralding and a processional accompaniment. Afterwards we hear no more of the cornets, though it is possible they may have provided the music for the choral singing or the dancing. The coronation procession was preluded by 'a lively Flourish of Trumpets' and concluded with a 'Great Flourish' of the same.

The fact that in the original Blackfriars version of *The Malcontent* the prologue marched on and off to the music of cornets suggests that at a later period the custom of combining trumpets with cornets began by heralding the characters with a flourish and bringing them on processionally to a cornet accompaniment. Something similar was often done very effectively in the Shakespearean representations of half a century ago. But if this was the origin of the custom, it became curiously extended in practice. A considerable number of stage directions associating trumpets with cornets cannot be interpreted in this

way. Either they are not connected with formal entries or (more rarely) the order of the instruments is reversed. An example illustrative of both exceptions occurs in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, V, 2, where, the scene being a place near the lists, we get 'Cornets. Trompets sound as to a charge.' Later on, during the unseen combat, the cornets alone were used six times for flourishes. More puzzling still is the system followed—if it can be so styled—in *The Double Marriage*. In Act II, sc. 2, while a sea-fight is in progress at a distance, we get 'Flourish trumpets, cornets,' though in the previous scene at the opening of the battle we get only 'Charge, trumpets and shot within.' Elsewhere in the play trumpets and cornets are used indifferently for flourishes, cornets being solely employed for the purpose in Act III and trumpets solely in Act V.

Other evidence besides the use of cornets in the play goes to show that the text of *Henry VIII* has not come down to us in its pristine state. The fact that the original topical title of the play has been altered in itself indicates revision. Sir Henry Wotton, in his historic letter minutely detailing the circumstances connected with the burning down of the Globe, states that at the time 'the King's players had a new play, called *All is True*, representing some principal pieces of the reign of Henry VIII, which was set forth with many extraordinary circumstances of pomp and majesty, even to the matting of the stage.'[43] Now, there is cogent reason to believe that

All is True was the title, not the sub-title, of the play: remark how the prologue harps on the truth of the incidents about to be portrayed, the insinuation being that many of the features in Rowley's old Henry VIII play, *When You See Me, You Know Me*, at which its jibes are directed, were not true. People were no more prone in Jacobean times to engage in the unprofitable task of killing the slain than they are to-day, and to endow the title and prologue with point we are bound to assume a recent revival by the Fortune players of Rowley's popular piece. To admit that revival is as good as admitting that it evoked *Henry VIII*.[44] Sometimes the success of the Fortune players hit the King's Men harder than anyone suspects. Weight is given to the presumption of the revival by the fact that *When You See Me, You Know Me* was reprinted in 1613. It has never yet been properly grasped that reprints of plays throughout the century more often than not indicate recent revival of those plays.

The altering of old titles was not a mere matter of whim: there was method in playhouse madness. 'The players,' writes Donald Lupton, 'are as crafty with an old play as bauds with old faces; the one puts on a new, fresh colour, the other a new face and name.'[45] Like all generalizations this is probably a trifle too sweeping, but there can be little doubt that revival often spelled revisal and re-naming. The King's Men were not above tricks of this order, and Shakespeare himself was not sacrosanct. Three

several items of evidence prove that for some years after 1618, *Twelfth Night* was known as *Malvolio*. As for revisal, we must bear in mind that, no matter whether an old play was strong or weak, the practice was, in taking it off the shelf, to give it a vigorous overhauling. Lucky, indeed, was the masterpiece that escaped maltreatment: Shakespeare suffered as well as Marlowe. In this connection it is curious to note how long Davenant has been unjustly execrated as the initial perverter of our great national dramatist. It is about time we recognized that at least one of the masterpieces he tinkered at had been tinkered already. No doubt his conduct was reprehensible; but let us not forget the school in which he was reared, and how difficult it was for an *alumnus* of that school not to be blinded by precedent. Here and there in the Folio traces are to be found of the early poisoning of the wells. *Troilus and Cressida*, *Macbeth*, *Timon of Athens*, *The Tempest*, none is free from suspicion of impurity.

Owing possibly to lack of grasp of bygone playhouse practices, no one hitherto has expressed any doubts as to the authenticity of *Henry VIII*. It has been taken for granted that the Folio text is thoroughly representative of the original Globe play. Yet, when one comes to think of it, nothing can be advanced against the supposition that the source was a later Blackfriars prompt book, and something can be said in its favour. The internal evidence, as already detailed, gives strong support to that theory.

So far as any system of selection can be determined, the promoters of the First Folio seem to have preferred the latest texts rather than the purest and best. Not being gifted with powers of divination, recking nothing of the fierce light that was eventually to be directed upon them and their work, they simply played for safety. The latest texts were precisely those which which the playgoing reader would be most familiar: to give him Shakespeare undiluted would be to give him a Shakespeare unrecognizable. Suspicion has been lulled concerning the prime authenticity of *Henry VIII* by the preservation of the original prologue, but the anomaly of the association of an original prologue with a sophisticated text is not without its parallel. An example is to be found in the belated First Quarto of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.

As we have seen, in bygone theatrical times revival and revisal were practically synonymous terms, and it is much less difficult to assume a revival of *Henry VIII* between 1613 and 1623 than it is to assume the contrary. Admit the probabilities, and the text takes on a new aspect. In the circumstances, it is impossible to avoid endorsing Mr. E. H. C. Oliphant's reasoned conclusion that the play was written in collaboration by Shakespeare and Fletcher, and revised at a later period by Massinger. No other theory solves all the problems presented by the text.

Something more needs to be said of the possible

usefulness of the new test to investigators bent on determining the date and condition of unprinted and belatedly printed old plays. I cannot better suggest how it should be applied than by demonstrating my own method and giving the results of some of my own inquiries. In accord with what has already been shown, I can aver with some confidence that all texts, save King's Men's texts, calling for the use of both trumpets and cornets, are of a date not earlier than 1619, since the test itself can be tested, and its accuracy proved. This conclusion applies, for example, to *The Birth of Merlin*[46] and to the untitled MS. of *Thomas of Woodstock*.[47] But the most satisfactory result of my probings has been in connection with *The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green*, a long-popular play not printed until 1659, although first produced by the Admiral's Men in 1600.[48] This is described on the title-page as having been 'divers times publickly acted by the Princes Servants,' and it can be shown to have been printed from a prompt copy of the later Jacobean period. One begins to suspect that the text is not in its pristine state when one finds directions for music between the acts, and recalls that no inter-act music was given in the public theatres throughout the Shakespearean period; and suspicion is confirmed by the use of both cornets and trumpets in the play.[49] Then comes the discovery which closely approximates the date of the prompt book. At l. 2177, we get in a direction for entrance 'Captain Westford,

Sill Clark,' a not wholly successful attempt on the part of the printer to give the names of a character and of its representative. (Directions of this sort, with prompters' interpolations, are not uncommon in the old drama.) One is not a whit surprised that Sir Edmund Chambers [50] has utterly failed to find any trace of an actor called Sill Clark: there never was any such person. The name is a printer's misreading of 'Will Carp,' the prompter's contraction of 'William Carpenter.' First to be traced with the Lady Elizabeth's Men in 1611, Carpenter was a member of Prince Charles's company from 1619 until its dissolution in 1625. All the indications, therefore, point to the fact that the prompt book from which the play was printed was made within those six years, most probably *circa* 1622.

A PLUMMET FOR BOTTOM'S DREAM

WHETHER they sweat for duty or for meed it behoves those who have dedicated their lives to 'the constant service of the antique world' to tread warily. The path of the Elizabethan investigator, in particular, passes over 'slippery ice-pavements,' where 'men had need to be frost-nail'd well, they may break their necks else.' But the disastrous results of a fall are sometimes slow in developing, and there be Shakespearean commentators now striding along in seven-leagued boots whose reputations will eventually limp on crutches. In this category must be reckoned those paradoxical reactionaries, who, while entertaining a certain measure of contempt for former methods of investigation, exert their powers to give new life to hoary-headed fallacies. Let us hope that if they resemble nothing so much as those imperturbable seventeenth-century cartographers who deceived the stranger within the gate by issuing maps purporting to represent contemporary London but based on hopelessly antiquated surveys, their shortcomings will as soon be apparent.

The hour, indeed, has struck for the arraignment of Shakespearean scholarship, if only because Shake-

spearean scholarship has elected to believe that the master wrote more than one of his plays for private performance at the instance of his patrons. To the few who happen to have done any hard, independent thinking on the point, it is not at all surprising that not a tittle of evidence has been advanced to show the possibility or probability of such an act. The surprise comes with the realization that in an age of testing and readjustment mere guesswork has, by sheer force of iteration, crystallized into a simulacrum of gospel truth.

In the matter of private performances the Elizabethan court set the fashion, and the court evinced no liking for green dramatic fruit. On the contrary, the Queen had a predilection for acting that had been mellowed by the scorching beams of public scrutiny. The players had good reason to be thankful for this sensible attitude, since it enabled the Privy Council to counter the hostility directed against them by the City Fathers by commanding that they be allowed to pursue their profession, in order that they might be in constant readiness to entertain her Majesty. In theatrical patents, as well as in sundry less momentary pronouncements, that was the *raison d'être* regularly advanced. This attitude was in keeping with Elizabeth's frugality. Though court perfomances were duly paid for, variety of players and variety of plays were none the less provided at the public expense.

Whether it was that she begrudged to others the

conjugal bliss that had eluded her, or had grown to an undue exaltation of celibacy owing to the exaggerated tributes to her virginity paid by a host of pens, Elizabeth, in her declining years, looked askance on those of her train who deserted the paths of single blessedness. Unlike her successor and his consort, she indulged the court with no costly celebration when a royal favourite entered the married state. What festivities were held over the event had to be held elsewhere. In her day, the adjunct of a wedding feast in the mansions of the nobility, gentry and richer citizens was a masque or a play, sometimes both, but preferentially a masque, as that expansile form of entertainment permitted of dancing in which all could join.

It needs to be clearly recognized that it was not until Jacobean times the court wedding-masque or wedding-play emerged. The remoter a sequence of events the more liable are they to be compressed, and it is to this tendency towards unification through the telescoping of time we owe the clouding of the foregoing important fact. Moreover, while the court wedding-masque dates from 1604, the court wedding-play (by which, I mean, of course, a play written for the occasion) cannot be traced earlier than 1614, the year in which Daniel's pastoral tragi-comedy, *Hymen's Triumph* was produced at Denmark House by command of Queen Anne in celebration of the nuptials of a favourite maid of honour. This play, though

undoubtedly performed by professionals, was not afterwards given in public. Another score of years were to elapse before plays written specially for the entertainment of the court were to be repeated in the ordinary theatres. In Caroline days, a group of courtier-poets, Mayne, Carlell, Habington, Suckling, pale reflexes of French preciosity but ill-content with the tepid applause of Whitehall, gave their plays after court production, without fee or reward, to the Blackfriars. There they boasted in their prologues of their utter lack of venality, only to be countered in answering prologues by sturdy Richard Brome, who, fighting on behalf of the bread-and-butter dramatist, maintained that the new commodity of wit fetched in the market precisely what it was worth. But it was a case of *Athanasius contra mundum*; and to this incursion of the dilettanti, more than anything else, was due the slowing-down of the great Elizabethan impetus.

I have set out these facts at some length and with precise circumstantiality because it is essential they should be viewed strictly in their proper sequence. Let it be said once for all that in the days of Shakespeare's creative activity, no private play, whether originating at the court, the Universities, the Inns of Court or elsewhere, ever found its way to the regular stage. In his time, the players presented no play publicly that had not been written for public use, no play uncommissioned and unpurchased. They were much too jealous of their

rights not to see that they had rights in the beginning.

These facts clear the atmosphere. They show us why, thanks to the sheep-like qualities of generations of Shakespearean commentators, Bottom's dream still hath no bottom. Times without number we have been told that the paragon of fairy plays was written in celebration of some distinguished nuptials graced by the presence of the Queen, and assurance of the truth of this has led to much fruitless searching of bygone nooks and crannies in pursuit of this provokingly elusive inspirational event. The stupidity of the thing lay in putting the cart before the horse. Internal evidence—the graceful reference to the Queen, and Puck's pointed epithalamium—indicate particularity, but not necessarily, initial particularity. If investigators have slipped up here, it is because they have laboured so long under a misapprehension identical with that which delayed understanding of *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*, nothing less than the belief that the original text has wholly and solely come down to us. Sundry discrepancies, such as that existing between the five-days' action indicated in the opening speeches of Theseus and Hippolyta and the three days' action of the play, might surely have suggested the possibility of subsequent revision;[51] but the truth of the matter is that, owing to the painful belatedness of our investigation of early theatrical conditions, it is only just dawning upon us that the popular Eliza-

bethan drama was moulded in wet clay and seldom allowed to harden.

My purpose now is to show that, in the quarto text of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, we have, not a privately commissioned and privately produced play adapted for public representation, but the exact opposite. Of one thing I feel assured: whether I am right or wrong in associating the prime alteration of the play with a certain specific event shortly to be spoken of, at least my hypothesis stands on firmer ground than any other hypothesis that has been profferred in explanation of the peculiarities of the text.

Now, first, as to the date of origin. Common belief, the result of deductions from a misinterpreted allusiveness, added and abetted by delusive metrical tests, assigns the *Dream* to 1595, but all we know for certain is that the play has place among those of its author commended by Francis Meres in his *Wits Treasurie*, a book entered on the Stationers' Register on September 7, 1598. Elsewhere, I have shown reasons for believing that the play was primarily a public-theatre production, written late in 1597 or early in 1598, to take advantage of the prevailing craze for 'nocturnals.'[52] Familiar references to the new type of confined comedy occur in the plays of Marston and the pamphlets of Dekker, but, chiefly owing to their inability to arrive at its distinguishing characteristics, its uprise has been completely ignored by our dramatic historians. According to my

reading, the nocturnal (of which I trace excellent examples in *The Two Angry Women of Abington* and *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*), was a special kind of comedy presenting for at least an entire act an unbroken series of night scenes. It generally had a rustic *milieu*, and it depended for its comic effect on the odd mistakes committed by the characters in the dark. To my mind, there are more unlikely things than that *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* was at once a sublimation and a burlesque of the common run of nocturnals, with the sublimation in the main action and the burlesque in the Pyramus and Thisbe interlude. In the average play of this type, a good deal of the effect was procured by the constant bringing on and carrying off of lights, but it is noticeable that in the dark scenes in the wood, Shakespeare makes no resort to this expedient. It may be that he looked upon it as an overdone stage trick, and gently mocked at it in the moonshine of his interlude. For the very good reason that the rage for nocturnals was at its height in 1598, I cannot go with the great majority in dating the *Dream* three years earlier, and must perforce assign it to late in 1597.

It is curious how Shakespeare's comedy, partly through its pronounced lyrical features and partly owing to the number of its boys' parts, savours to the scholar of a Blackfriars play of the *Cynthia's Revels* period. Yet we know it was a public-theatre play of at least three years' earlier, and we are at a loss for any trace of the existence of a 'private'

theatre in 1595–1596 to suggest emulation. Moreover, the economic composition of adult companies in the sixteenth century rendered rivalry on strictly imitative lines impossible. Yet, if we take the Quarto text of the *Dream* as thoroughly representative of the original play, its cast indicates such rivalry. It demands not only eight boy-players for the female and fairy characters, but at least four or five competent boy-singers. One searches in vain for any previous public-theatre play calling for more than a couple of boy-singers: and for very good reason—the demand could not have been met. Shakespeare's company at the period in question consisted of about nine 'sharers,' or players of the principal male parts, five non-sharers (or 'hired men,' as the phrase went) for the lesser male parts, and six boys for the youthful female parts and pages. The minor male parts, it is to be noted, were frequently 'doubled,' but the female parts never. Usually one or two of the boys were trained singers, but it cannot be found that any public-theatre company ever boasted possession of six boy-singers. That number was much in excess of the normal requirements. Shakespeare made little or no employment of the boy-singer before *Love's Labour's Lost*, and even in the special court form in which that play has come down to us, it bears evidence of the employment of two boy-singers only.

These discrepancies I hope presently to reconcile. Meanwhile, it is necessary to concentrate our

attention on the resemblance borne by the *Dream*, more especially is its pronounced lyrical features, to the private-theatre play of 1600 and thereabouts. One of those features—the terminal song—it has in common with *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Twelfth Night*, a circumstance grouping all three of the plays together. Now, what requires to be noted in this connection is that the terminal song was not a regular characteristic of the children's plays in the early private-theatre period. That period terminated in 1590, and was followed by a blank of over a lustrum. *Midas* is alone among Lyly's comedies in presenting a terminal song. It was not until the beginning of the second private-theatre period, somewhere about the close of 1597, when the Children of the Chapel Royal and the Paul's boys renewed acting, that the terminal song sprang into vogue. That it held sway in both houses is shown by the fact that we find it in *Histriomastix* (1598), *The Maid's Metamorphosis* (1599), *Cynthia's Revels* (1600), *Antonio's Revenge* (1601),and *The Poetaster* (1601).

These conclusions have a much wider bearing than on the point under discussion. Since *Love's Labour's Lost* presents a terminal song, its full text cannot be older than 1598, the year in which the play was first published. This inference hardens into certainty once we grasp the implications of the notification on the title-page: 'as it was presented before her Highnes this last Christmas. Newly corrected and augmented By W. Shakespere.' Of a

surety, while doubts may be entertained about the corrections, the augmentations are indisputable. Look at the interminable last act. It is four times longer than the second and third acts, and considerably in excess of any last act Shakespeare ever wrote. Usually his fifth act is the shortest. When one seeks a reason for this grave inequality, one finds that this overgrown section presents two excrescences, a masque and a terminal song, and one is forced to conclude that in these interpolations, and in what their introduction necessitated, lie the main, perhaps sole, augmentations. They point to a court routine of which all the minutiæ are unfortunately little known. When these are fully recognized it will at once be seen why English Court influence, like Court influence generally, has proved inimical to the best interests of the drama.

In pre-Restoration days, it was the duty of the Master of the Revels to select plays for the regular Christmas and Shrovetide festivities out of the current public repertories, to have them rehearsed before him, and to suggest sundry alterations and additions in accord with the court's pronounced liking for interludes of song, dance, and masque[53]. The more skilful the craftsman the less injurious these enforced dovetailings proved, but (since some plays of note have only come down to us in their special court form) many good plays were, as literature, irreparably damaged in the process.

Those who desire proof that Elizabethan court

influence maimed and marred fine drama, together with clear indications of the method of procedure, need not look beyond Dekker's *Old Fortunatus*. The only text of the play that has come down to us is that of the court version, published two months after its performance before the Queen on December 27, 1599. Even if Henslowe's *Diary* had failed to convey to us that the play was an old play refurbished and augmented, we should be able to arrive at the truth through the entry in the Stationers' Register, which speaks of it as 'old Fortunatus in his new lyverie.' Devoid of lyric interspersements in its prime public-theatre form, this engaging romance presents masque-like interludes in the opening scene of the first and fourth acts, and has, in all, four songs. One must necessarily absolve Dekker for the high offence of his last scene, where, through the tasteless intrusion of abject sycophancy, dramatic illusion goes utterly to smash. The tribute, we may be sure, was matter of official compulsion rather than outer spontaneity. Still, though Elizabeth's capability of swallowing flattery was unlimited, the Master of the Revels, if he had any glimmerings of artistic propriety or æsthetic sense, might have remained content with the honeypots of adulation spilled out before the Queen in the prologue and epilogue. Lastly, it will be noticed that the play has a terminal song, clear proof that the court either followed private-theatre procedure or dictated its conventions.

I come now to Hecuba. To reconcile the inconsistencies in the Quarto text of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, it only needs to demonstrate the probability of the play's performance at a noble wedding honoured by the Queen's presence some time between the period of its original production and its publication. Events of this order between 1597 and 1600 were not of sufficient frequency to afford any embarrassment of choice, and I believe, and hope to make most other people believe—save those who have formulated rival theories—that I have found the event.

To begin with, an allusion in the play—never yet satisfactorily accounted for—narrows the quest very considerably. Taken as a later interpolation, it can be readily interpreted. Among the entertainments proffered to Theseus in honour of his nuptials is one of

> The thrice three muses mourning for the death
> Of learning late deceased in beggary.

This, it must be noted, he assumes to be a satire, not a masque, and rejects as unsuitable to the occasion. The allusion is undoubtedly to the painful end of the author of *The Tears of the Muses*. Spenser and learning were synonymous terms: not until Milton came was there poet more erudite. His death had occurred in King Street, Westminster, in January, 1599, 'for lack of bread,' as Jonson told Drummond of Hawthornden. This may not be true, but it suf-

fices for our purpose that it was the popular belief of the time. A couple of years after Spenser's death it was lamented of him in *The Return from Parnassus*[54] that

> . . . Unregarding soil
> Unlaced the line of his desired life,
> Denying maintenance for his dear relief.
> Careless care to prevent his exequy,
> Scarce deigning to shut up his dying eye.

Since, then, there was revision of the play after January, 1599, and probably for distinguished nuptials, the problem is to find a suitable evocative occasion within the next eighteen months, or a reasonable time before the publication of the Quarto in or about October, 1600. Only one event of the kind answers all the requirements. This was the marriage of Henry, Lord Herbert, Katharine Parr's great-nephew, to Anne Russell, Elizabeth's favourite maid of honour, celebrated in the Blackfriars at the residence of the bride's mother, on June 16, 1600, and the two following days. Arrangements for the prolonged festivities, including the provision of masques and plays, had been made considerably in advance. A month earlier, Rowland Whyte had conveyed the intelligence to a friend that everything had been settled save the naming of the day, which awaited the Queen's pleasure, she having signified her intention of being present.[55]

That summer, as it happened, Shakespeare's

company did not go on tour. The plague, for once, forbore to drive them into the country, and they were profitably engaged at their new theatre on the Bankside. We have no evidence to show that they or any other particular company performed at the nuptial festivities, but, assuming that they did so perform, what play could have been more suitable to a marriage solemnized on the verge of Midsummer Day than *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and what play could have lent itself more readily to remoulding for the event? Not to labour the point, I shall proceed to show reasons for believing that the *Dream* was performed at Lady Russell's house on her daughter's wedding night, the only night during the festivities on which the Queen was present, and that on the two following nights Shakespeare's company gave *As You Like It* and the Paul's Boys *The Maid's Metamorphosis*.

My thesis is that all three plays were more or less altered to bring them into full harmony with the occasion, and that the alterations can be traced in their texts. I believe that originally *The Dream* had little or no song, possibly only a lullaby for a solo treble voice, and that, basing on the lines of *The Maid's Metamorphosis*,[56] Shakespeare, in adapting the play to the wedding, added extra lyrics. One thing is certain: whatever song it originally contained, the concluding epithalamium was an afterthought, and inspired by outer circumstance.

As already hinted, there are good reasons for be-

lieving that the Children of Paul's presented a play on one of the nights. Seeing that the sixteenth-century private-theatres invariably closed during the summer, it is not improbable that the services of some of the Paul's Boys were enlisted for the fairy attendants in the *Dream*, and to sing the songs. In a minor degree, they would also have proved useful in *As You like It*. As for their association with 'common' players (as the phrase went), though choir boys were not permitted to appear at the public theatres, there could have been no objection to the association in private, more especially at performances which were distinctively of the court order. I lay no particular stress on the fact that at this period there seems to have been some friendly understanding between the Globe players and the Master of Paul's, proof of which lies in the circumstance that Dekker's *Satiromastix, or The Untrussing of the Humorous Poet*, after being produced at the Globe, was given over in the course of a few weeks to the Paul's Boys. It is to be doubted if Shakespeare's company had ever a monopoly of the special services of any company of boy-players. Would it not rather appear that any adult company, on being summoned to court, or to appear elsewhere before the Queen, had the right to requisition the services of the Children of the Chapel Royal or the Children of Paul's for the better execution of the special songs introduced on these particular occasions? I think the Admiral's Men had this right when they played

Old Fortunatus at court in 1599, and availed of it for the performance of the interpolated masque in two parts, given one at the beginning and one at the end of the play. Note that, just as the masquers are about to depart at the finish, two old men come in to speak the special epilogue and that one of them, in addressing the Queen on bended knee, refers to the performers kneeling behind him as 'young boys' with 'curled locks.'

Too much of anything being good for nothing, Theseus certainly acted with forethought in quietly rejecting the proffered entertainment of the *Nine Muses*. No doubt Shakespeare was well acquainted with the fact that a masque in which eight of the Muses were to figure had been devised for performance on the Herbert wedding-night. Whether this was given before or after the play it would be difficult to say: most likely before. At court it was not unusual to have a masque and a play on the same night, the play generally coming first. Nobody, however, expressed any anticipative interest in the dramatic fare. All the talk, both before and after the event, was, as Chamberlain wrote to Carleton,[57] 'of the maske of the eight ladies of honour and other gentle-women in name of the Muses that came to seeke one of their fellowes.' The Missing Muse, concerning whom the masque was preluded by 'a fine speech that made mention of a ninth, much to her honour and praise' (as RowlandWhyte put it), is generally said by social historians to have been the

Queen. But, seeing that the maids of honour who gave the masque had just lost one of their number, it is surely more rational to assume that the missing Muse was the bride.

In an earlier letter outlining the scheme of the entertainment, Whyte had written: 'these eight dawnce to the musiq Apollo brings,' a matter-of-fact statement we require to let bite into our minds, so much hangs upon it. The masque was distinctly a woman's masque, and the masquers, after gracefully treading the mazes of their elaborate opening dance, proceeded to take partners from among the women spectators with the view of executing more familiar steps. Mistress Mary Fitton, their leader —but Rowland Whyte must be left to tell the rest:

> 'Mrs. Fitton went to the Queen, and wooed her to dawnce: her Majestie asked what she was. "Affection," she said. "Affection," said the Queen, "Affection is false." Yet her Majestie rose and dawnced.'

And danced, notwithstanding the burden of her sixty-seven years, 'gayement et de belle disposition,' as the French Ambassador duly reported. Wonderful woman!

The supreme tactfulness of Shakespeare's glancing allusion in the *Dream* to the Queen's presence is in striking contrast to Dekker's illusion-marring tribute in *Old Fortunatus*, though it must, of course, be admitted that different occasions demanded different treatment. In Oberon's mouth, the reference

to 'the fair vestal throned in the west' was dramatically appropriate, for Oberon himself was throned in the east.

We come now to the performances on the second and third nights. Frederick Gard Fleay was perhaps the most industrious, the most ingenious, the most dogmatic and the least trustworthy of all Elizabethan investigators, but he had the good fortune to make occasional happy hits, and in dealing with *The Maid's Metamorphosis*, he struck the nail fairly and squarely on the head, though he just missed driving it home.[58] Misled by the old fallacy that plays were specially written in Elizabethan times for notable nuptials, he expressed the belief that *The Maid's Metamorphosis* owed its existence to the Herbert-Russell alliance. His case rests solely on the words with which Phœbus concludes the play:—

> And make report that when their wedding chaunc'te
> Phoebus gave musicke and the Muses dauncte.

The allusion here becomes all the more apparent when we recall that the play was entered on the Stationers' Register for publication about six weeks after the wedding.

An equally strong, perhaps a stronger, case can, I think, be made for the giving of *As You Like It* on the remaining night. To begin with, the play was certainly on the acting list antecedent to the wedding, seeing that its publication was blocked at

Stationers' Hall a little before August 4, 1600.[59] Sundry hitherto unaccountable technical blemishes in it can now be traced to their origin. Not only has it been altered, but, like *Love's Labour's Lost* and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, altered in a restricted way, since it bears indications that revision was almost wholly confined to the last act, an analogy pointing to enlargement for a special occasion.

That occasion the text, when rightly construed, shows to have been a wedding. How otherwise are we to account for the ugly interpolation of the masque of Hymen—for interpolation it certainly is. One can take ll. 123-144 of Act V, sc. 4, bodily out of the play without interrupting the dialogue or derogating a whit from the play's sum and substance. Little wonder that scholarship jibes at accepting the addition as Shakespeare's. Here, the action, after running smoothly along its own plane, suddenly and mysteriously jumps to another, landing in the midst of the very conventions of mythological pastoral the poet has hitherto taken care to avoid. Nothing more illuminative has been written concerning the masque than Mr. J. W. Holme's sound statement that it 'smacks rather of courtly pastoral than of country life,' the unidealized country life Shakespeare had just been portraying. The reason why it so smacks is that courtly routine inspired it.

Moreover, one other disfigurement of the last act is to be traced to the same influence. Scene 3 is a meaningless excrescence, only to be accounted for

as a concession to the taste of a courtly audience. It serves no other purpose than to give opportunity to the two pages to sing 'It was a lover and his lass.' Pages in Arden!—*que diable aller faire dans cette galère!* Of a surety, Amiens was the only troller in the original play. So pointless is the scene that, like the masque, it can be eliminated without detriment to the action. These singing pages stepped straight out of a private theatre convention: one finds a curiously analogous scene in the Blackfriars boys' play, *The Malcontent.*

Note how, owing to these interpolations and the revision they brought about, unity of impression finally goes by the board. We are bound to take the action here as continuous, since no lapse of time is indicated, yet between the third and fourth scenes a whole night and more has mysteriously disappeared. It is usual, I know, to impute discrepancies of this order to the poet's 'carelessness,' but Shakespeare was not, and could not afford to be, a careless writer. The carelessness is ours in saddling the wrong horse.

The marvel about these blemishes is (the Folio testifying) that they were allowed to remain to the end. But were they so allowed? Does it not appear that the Folio bears false witness? These questions demand grave consideration. We have to ask ourselves what significance lies in the fact that court versions of popular plays were occasionally published immediately after their court performance,

and how it comes that the only versions we have of several important plays are court versions. It looks to me as if these specially made variants were at once discarded as unsuitable for public performance, and that the players went on acting the originals. Unless we can assume as much, it is difficult to see how the variants found their way so quickly to the Press. Public-theatre plays were purchased outright by the companies which produced them, and among the players there was strong objection to the publication of any play whose drawing powers had not been fully exhausted. It might be argued, of course, that the printing of a play recently given at court, with due statement to that effect, would have been an excellent advertisement for the play and its players, but the players appeared at court regularly at Christmas, and sometimes at Shrovetide, and there were few companies of any consequence that had not been summoned there. The title-page announcement of court performance was nothing more than a publisher's bait. We are forced to conclude that the printing of these court versions was permitted because the players had no further use for them.

To admit this is as good as to admit that plays altered after the court manner for presentation before a distinguished private audience would also be discarded, and stand a good chance of soon finding their way to the printer. But in such cases a different method of publication would obtain: no reference

would be made on the title-page to the occasions which had inspired the alterations. The possibilities are that the variants would sail under false colours, and be described as having been acted by such-and-such a company at such-and-such a theatre. In this connection, it is vital to note that, of the three plays postulated by me as having been presented during the Herbert wedding-festivities, two were published immediately afterwards, and a third—*As You Like It*—when about to be, was stayed at Stationers' Hall. *The Maid's Metamorphosis* was registered on July 24, 1600, and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* on October 8, following.

Sciolism is always disturbed to the centre by the shock of the new idea, but, at the risk of becoming a victim to its fury, I must perforce pursue these arguments to their logical end. I cannot now believe tha *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* and *As You Like It* were ever performed on the public stage before the downfall of the theatres in precisely the form in which they have come down to us. Their extra-lyrical features are like Macbeth's amen, and stick in the throat. The *Dream* in particular demands a group of boy-singers larger than Shakespeare's company ever possessed. To those who take the statements of early seventeenth-century play publishers as the equivalent of sworn testimony, who consider publication *prima facie* evidence and iterated publication proof positive, this will obviously appear a wholly preposterous attitude. My

appeal, however, is to that small, unshackled band of scholars whose wisdom is the fruit of bitter experience, who are no longer to be deceived by tricks of the trade, and who know how little credence is to be placed in the *obiter dicta* of the old publishers and promoters, yea, even of the promoters and publishers who had the honour and glory of ushering a First Folio into the world.

THE DATE OF SHAKESPEARE'S *HAMLET*

IT is difficult to understand on what grounds the vast majority of Elizabethan scholars have settled down complacently into the opinion that the earliest possible date for the production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is 1601. Scanty and well worn as is the positive and negative evidence already to hand on the subject, one has only to give it careful consideration to arrive at the conclusion that the utmost limits for the play are 1598–1600. Of a surety, the significant silence of Francis Meres builds up the earlier barrier, just as the vital testimony of Gabriel Harvey builds up the later. No doubt, this will be reckoned a somewhat audacious statement, viewing the fact that Harvey enjoys no sort of reputation as a lucid witness. On this score, scholarship should sit in metaphorical sackcloth and ashes for its prolonged obtuseness. To its shame be it said that, ever since Percy and Malone differed over the precise implications of Harvey's famous note on 'the most admired of contemporary poets,' conflict of opinion on the point has gravely discounted its supreme historical importance.[60] The great stumbling block has been Harvey's inclusion of Edmund Spenser among those he characterizes as 'our florishing

metricians,' since to Steevens and many after him the death of Spenser in January, 1599 N.S., indicates that the note is of slightly earlier date. But, by a parity of reasoning, Harvey must have been writing in the wholly impossible year of 1592, for Thomas Watson, whom he places in the same category, died in that year. There is nothing incredible in the idea that a poet could 'flourish' long after the mortal part of him had passed away.

Harvey's note, it may be recalled, was inscribed on f. 394 v. of the copy of Speght's *Chaucer* which he had acquired (as his dated signature betokens) in 1598, shortly after the publication of the work. Malone's mature opinion relative to the period when it was written is very sensible. In 1803, he told Percy, after having examined the folio for himself, that it was reasonable to suppose that the note in question being 'at the very end and subjoined to Lydgate's catalogue,' was not written until Harvey had perused the whole volume.[61] And, in accord with that view, he finally expressed the belief in his *Variorum Shakespeare* that the note was in all probability made 'in the latter end of the year 1600.'[62] In this sound reasoning there was a strong clue to the date of *Hamlet*, but well nigh a century was to elapse before an Elizabethan scholar arose with sufficient acumen to give it confirmation. The better to see how this was done by Harvey's accomplished editor, Professor G. C. Moore Smith, we require to re-peruse the passage in the note in which Harvey

—rather remarkably, since the play had not yet been published—leads up to the vogue of *Hamlet* among the elect:

'. . . The Earle of Essex much commendes Albions England: and not unworthily for diuerse notable pageants, before, & in the Chronicle. Sum Inglish, & other Histories nowhere more sensibly described, or more inwardly discouered. The Lord Mountjoy makes the like account of Daniels peece of the Chronicle, touching the Vsurpation of Henrie of Bullingbrooke, which in deede is a fine, sententious, & politique peece of Poetrie: as proffitable, as pleasurable. The younger sort takes much delight in Shakespeares Venus & Adonis: but his Lucrece, & his tragedie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, haue it in them, to please the wiser sort.'

Dr. Moore Smith thinks the reference to Essex in the present tense conclusive, since Essex must have been alive when it was made, and his end came on the scaffold in February, 1601. There is here justification of Malone and solid grounds for Dr. Moore Smith's own belief that the first performance of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* cannot have taken place later than 1600.[63]

My present purpose is to substantiate these conclusions and, by force of new evidence, carry the investigation to its ultimate stage. It is happily in my power to show that *Hamlet*, or, to speak by the card, the Hamlet of the Second Quarto, our first authentic text, was first brought out at the Globe in 1600, possibly as early as Easter, but more probably late

in the summer. The proof lies solely in a hitherto unsuspected topical allusion of a theatrical order first to be found in that particular Quarto. In the portion of the text equivalent to Act II, sc. 2, of the modern editions, or, to give a closer reference, at page 36, l. 332 of the Griggs facsimile, where Hamlet, on learning of the arrival of the players, makes contemplatively humorous reply to Rosencrantz, beginning with 'he that playes the King shall be welcome,' all is plain sailing until we come to 'the humorous man shall end his part in peace,' a fleeting allusion the significance of which has been long forgotten. No commentator has been sufficiently steeped in Elizabethan stage history to get within a mile of its meaning. Sir Sidney Lee's gloss on the clause is typical in its ineptness:

> 'The actor of "humorist" or character parts, like Falconbridge or Mercutio, whose whimsicality is commonly characterized by a quick temper.'[64]

Nothing could be more irrelevant: the allusion is strictly topical. It glances at a remarkable scene that had taken place at the Globe not long previously, at the first performance of Jonson's *Every Man Out of his Humour*. The consensus of latter-day scholarly opinion is that this play was produced at the end of 1599, reckoning in the historical, not the legal way, the unconfusing way in which we now reckon the years.[65] Jonson himself dates it 1599 in the folio, but though for the most part he adopted the Cir-

cumcision style, his practice varied; consequently, as this leaves an element of doubt, our safest plan is to draw a reasonable inference from the entry of the play on the Stationers' Register on April 8, 1600. No one will dispute that it must have been produced at least a month or two earlier. It is our misfortune that no gossiping letter-writer of the Carleton or Chamberlain order has preserved for us details of the happenings on that turbulent first day; but, as luck would have it, it chances we are not wholly at a loss for information on the point. From a study of the Malone Society's reprint of the First Quarto of the play one fact readily emerges: viz., that on its trial trip Ben's barque successfully weathered the elements, but came close to being wrecked on approaching the haven. Of the precise stage business which evoked this eleventh-hour hubbub the printed play yields us no very clear particulars. About all that can be gleaned from it is that towards the end of the performance some counterfeit presentment of Queen Elizabeth either came on or was disclosed, creating in Macilente such sudden and intense surgings of loyalty that he was at once borne 'out of his humour,' and, after reverently apostrophizing the vision, fell on his knees to conclude the play with a prayer for the Queen. The audience not unnaturally took offence at this audacious dénouement and signified its disapproval in the usual whole-souled manner. There was no excuse for Jonson's breach of good taste, though he shortly afterwards sought

to advance one in claiming that 'there hath been *President* of the like Presentation in diuers Playes: and is yeerely in our Cittie *Pageants* or shewes of *Triumph*.'[66] Though primarily it was not the prayer at which the house took umbrage, there is some reason to believe that the main outcome of the disturbance was the general abandonment of the time-honoured practice of praying for the reigning monarch at the close of the play. Disaster, however, did not ensue, despite the fact that the humorous man was not allowed to end his part in peace. Jonson pulled the play out of the fire by forthwith altering his well-nigh catastrophic catastrophe, taking care, however, to print the original as well as the substituted ending when he came to publish his work.

The principle of the run had not then been established, and it was not even customary to give the most successful piece even two successive performances;[67] but there is no reason to doubt that sporadic repetitions of *Every Man Out of his Humour* were given later in the season. It is rational, therefore, to assume that any good-natured allusion to the *contretemps* which had imperilled the life of the play would have been apposite within the walls of the same theatre if made at a somewhat late period, while the play was still on the acting list. There seems to be some need to bear this in mind, for, much as one is tempted to assign the production of *Hamlet* to Easter, 1600, there happens to be another topical allusion in the tragedy which gives one serious

pause. A few lines after the Prince has promised that the exponent of the Macilentes shall be heard without interruption, he asks concerning the players 'How chances it they trauaile? Their residence both in reputation and proffit was better both wayes'; and Rosencrantz replies, 'I thinke their inhibition comes by meanes of the late innouation.' Here also is a riddle to be read, and read in a thoroughly honest way. If, as I take it, Q 2 yields us a legitimate acting version of the play, then we are not entitled to advance anything in solution of its puzzles either from the foregoing spurious Quarto or from the Folio. Since the Elizabethan play had perforce to be self-explanatory, and topical allusions, when indulged in, had to be comprehensible to the bulk of the audience, it is permissible to seek solutions only in the play itself or the events of the day. It does not follow because Q 1 omits all reference to inhibition and innovation and gives as the reason that:

> the principall publike audience that
> Came to them, are turned to priuate playes,
> And to the humour of children,

that therein lies the reading of the riddle. One might concede at a pinch that in 1600 the little eyases had made innovation, even though faced by the awkward fact that boy players were no novelty, children companies having been enjoyed a full quarter of a century earlier; but it is the height of absurdity to assume that their vogue could have brought about

the inhibition of any body of adult players. That was the rock on which Professor C. W. Wallace perished.[68] Not that he alone should be pilloried. Scholarship, throwing caution to the winds, has jumped to the conclusion that 'the tragedians of the city' must needs be identified with the Chamberlain's Men; but the Chamberlain's Men never travelled save under the compulsions of plague, and it cannot be shown that any body of common players was ever forced into the country by the superior attractiveness of the boys. There is a smack of sound common sense in Dr. Johnson's proposal that the words 'inhibition' and 'innovation' be transposed, so that the latter might be taken to refer to some company's break of routine in going into the country. To accept this would be to get a trifle nearer to the truth, since it excludes such a well-travelled body as the Chamberlain's Men from consideration. It seems to me that Rosencrantz's explanation was inspired by and came hot-foot on the heels of the Privy Council Order of June 22, 1600,[69] limiting the number of playhouses to two and forbidding all acting in London (*i.e.* all professional acting: the boys were looked upon as amateurs) save by the Globe and Fortune players, under penalty of imprisonment.[70] Nobody could foresee that the order was to prove a dead letter owing to the sloth of the Common Council in putting it into operation—sloth not due to any love or commiseration of the players, but to hatred of the Privy Coun-

cil; consequently, there must have been an immediate exodus into the country. If Shakespeare was writing *Hamlet* at this juncture and had got no further than the second act, it is difficult to see how the play could have been produced earlier than August. Viewed by the light of these events, subsequent textual discrepancies in the scene are readily explicable. Some little time must have passed, but, once the dreaded Privy Council order had proved a damp squib, the salt of the 'inhibition' reference would have lost its savour and another reason would have to be advanced for the travelling of the tragedians. As the text of Q 1 and the Folio shows, it was found none too aptly in the rivalry of the little eyases. But instead of elimination and substitution, there was clumsy dovetailing of new matter, so clumsy that the joints are still apparent. To demonstrate this, it only needs to make simple citation and indulge in a couple of dividing lines:

Ham. How chances it they trauaile? their residence both in reputation, and profit was better both wayes.
Ros. I thinke their inhibition comes by the meanes of the late innouasion.
Ham. Doe they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the Citty; are they so followed?
Ros. No indeede are they not.

Ham. How comes it? doe they grow rusty?
Ros. Nay, their indeauour keepes in the wonted pace; but there is Sir an ayrie of Children, little Yases, that cry

out on the top of question; and are most tyrannically clap't for't: these are now the fashion, and so beratle the common Stages (so they call them) that many wearing Rapiers are affraide of Goose-quills, and dare scarse come thither.

Ham. What are they Children? Who maintains 'em? How are they escoted? Will they pursue the Quality no longer than they can sing? Will they not say afterwards if they should grow themselves to common Players (as is most like if their meanes are not better) their Writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their owne Succession.

Ros. Faith there ha's been much to do on both sides: and the Nation holds it no sinne to tarre them to Controuersie. There was for a while no mony bid for argument vnlesse the Poet and the Player went to Cuffes in the Question.

Ham. Is't possible?

Guild. Oh, there ha's been much throwing about of Braines.

Ham. Do the Boyes carry it away?

Rosin. I that they do my Lord, *Hercules* & his load too.

Ham. It is not very strange, for my Vncle is King of Denmarke, and those that would make mouths at him while my father liued, giue twenty, fortie, fifty, a hundred duckets a peece for his Picture in little, s'bloud there is something in this more than naturall, if Philophie could find it out.

It is a simple matter to show that the portion of this between the lines is an afterthought, and bodily inserted. The whole is not connective. Hamlet's last speech is not a reply to Rosencrantz's last. Origin-

ally, it was evoked by Rosencrantz's 'No indeede are they not.' Hamlet, then, asked no questions about the players' unpopularity, but simply went on to give another illustration of public caprice. In the circumstances, this last speech should have been eliminated.

Some slight clue exists to the period when the inserted matter about the little eyases was written. One feels assured that, whatever the hour of its inception, the War of the Theatres assumed no particular prominence before the early months of 1601. Common familiarity with both *Poetaster* and *Satiromastix* is implied in Shakespeare's references to the abstention of rapier-wearers from the common theatres through dread of retaliatory ridicule, and to the gusto with which the town urged both sides into controversy. Jonson's satire is generally dated April, 1601;[71] and, assuming that to be approximately correct, Dekker's counterblast (as originally produced by the King's Men) must have followed not long after. As to the period when the boys carried it away, 'Hercules and his load too,' clearly it must have been after the blush of novelty had worn off the new *Hamlet*. It is indicated in *Poetaster*, III, 4, 373-376, where Histrio gives as the reason why the players have hired Demetrius to write a play abusing Horace:

> 'O, it will get us a huge deale of money, Captaine, and wee have need on't; for this winter ha's made us all poorer, then so many starv'd snakes: No bodie comes to us; not a gentleman, nor a ——'

Evidently—even before an extra fillip was given to their attractiveness by the production of plays indulging in virulent personal satire—the new body of Blackfriars boys, as indicated in the passage already cited from the *Hamlet* First Quarto, had drawn away 'the principall publicke audience,' otherwise the cream of the playgoing public, from the Globe. But, all things considered, it hardly seems likely that the interpolated passage in the tragedy dealing with the little eyases could have been written before May or June, 1601. This is a really vital conclusion: it shows that Q 2 satisfactorily represents the text of the original Shakespearean play, and that the spurious Quarto and the Folio derive from later versions.

THE MYSTERY OF THE *HAMLET* FIRST QUARTO

NOTHING could have been better calculated to befog the later line of Shakespearean commentators than the circumstances under which the first and second of the *Hamlet* quartos saw the light. Seldom has chicane proved so far-reaching in its results : in throwing dust into the eyes of the contemporary play-reader, the publishers effectually blinded posterity. They began by proffering to the public a spurious text as the true play, and, when they got an opportunity a year later of issuing the genuine text, they sought to cover up their fraud by describing the second quarto simply as an authoritative enlargement of its predecessor. Why latter-day commentators should have taken their mendacities as gospel truth it is difficult to comprehend : it is not as if they were wholly ignorant of the tricks of the Elizabethan trade. Such, however, has been their guilelessness that the spurious quarto has gained a wholly factitious importance in scholarly eyes. The old theory that it represents Shakespeare's first attempt at remodelling the *Ur-Hamlet*,[72] though a rank libel on the poet, still has its adherents. Others believe that it was a shorthand transcript of the genuine Globe tragedy, and that it owes its blem-

ishes to the fact that none of the players knew their lines, and omitted, transposed, and interpolated at will, sometimes spouting anything that came into their heads.[73] As much as to say that Burbage and his fellows, instead of being in the front rank of their profession, were of no more consequence and of no better quality than the rawest troupe of barnstormers. Scholarship has come to a pretty pass when it resorts to such miserable expedients to bolster a theory.

The truth is that, considerably as he was laid under contribution, Shakespeare had no hand or part in the making of the First Quarto. The basic element was Kyd's (assuming Kyd to have been the author of the *Ur-Hamlet*), and many fragments of the original structure remain. My belief is that, late in 1601, some manager of a country company who happened to possess a copy of the *Ur-Hamlet* conceived the idea of presenting it on his rounds as the new Globe success, and strove to give colour to the deception by making sundry Shakespearean infiltrations, fuller and truer at the beginning than at the end. Once admit the postulate and what more natural to suppose than that after the lapse of a few months, the prompt copy of the composite play, having served its purpose, was sold to an unscrupulous publisher?

In my preceding study of 'The Date of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*,' I have been to some pains to show that Q 1, so far as it drew from Shakespeare, drew

from a version a little later than the first, taking Q 2 to represent his play in its original form. Proof of this lies in the inclusion in its text of a summary of 'the young eyases' matter, an interpolation made in the summer of 1601, but not included in any of the authentic quartos before the publication of the First Folio. These facts negative the possibility that the spurious quarto was based on a hypothetical first draft of Shakespeare's play; and, taken in conjunction with other evidence, they likewise negative the possibility that, in its totality, the text was the result of a shorthand transcript. Not only do its scenes fail to follow faithfully the true Shakespearean sequence —undeviating from first to last in either quarto or folio—but it actually presents one particular scene wholly without counterpart in the genuine texts.[74] It is in these differences that we get the clue to the real basic element, the *Ur-Hamlet*, a point that now demands some consideration.

That the concoctor of the spurious text worked with a manuscript of the primal *Hamlet* at his elbow is shown by his reversion to the older (or what we have reason to believe the older) names of some of the characters. Polonius figures in his text as Corambis, Reynaldo as Montano, and Osric simply as 'a bragart gentleman,' a most inept description of Shakespeare's 'lapwing.' There is doubtless some significance also in the fact that the two sentinels have numbers instead of names before their speeches. It is remarkable that in the old German

version of *Hamlet*[75] one finds the name of Corambus substituted for Polonius, and still more remarkable that where Q 1 differs in scene-sequence from the genuine texts, it is in agreement with the sequence in the German play. Both evidently derive from the same original. Moreover, there are elements in the spurious text for which no other source can be postulated save the *Ur-Hamlet*. Notable among these is the unique scene already referred to, otherwise sc. 14 in the Bodley Head reprint, a readily accessible edition to which all my references apply. No doubt the hack who fashioned the play, whether a budding play-patcher of the Demetrius Fannius type or some quick-witted London player, was not wholly lacking in resource. Scattered here and there in his conglomeration are neatly harmonized echoes of the latest London successes, *Henry V*, *Twelfth Night* and *Satiromastix*.[76] But, whatever his ability, it was not within his province to add an entirely new scene to the models he was following. Versions of plays made for country use called for abbreviation, not expansion, of their originals, and, in Q 1, abbreviation can abundantly be traced. Nor has one to seek far for other relics of the *Ur-Hamlet*: they stand out prominently in the play-scene. To find here sundry speech-headings assigned to a Duke and Duchess is to become imbued with the suspicion that the adaptor was working from a non-Shakespearean base; and once one examines the dialogue, the suspicion becomes confirmed. Re-

mark the peculiarities of the opening speech. Note in the first place that the period indicated is forty years, a long stretch of time which in Shakespeare is very sensibly reduced. This might be deemed a triviality were it not for another and more significant divergence. In both versions the speech is in rhyme, but each is individual, and, most remarkable of all, since expansion here is not to be looked for, the speech in Q 1 is actually the longer. It is hardly to be supposed that the compounder went to the trouble of writing an entirely new speech when he had Shakespeare to copy. The only sensible conclusion is that he took the lines bodily from the *Ur-Hamlet*. Undoubtedly, other transferences of the kind occur elsewhere. In this connection, it is surely significant that, notwithstanding its comparative brevity, there are, all told, in Q 1, 240 lines not to be found in any guise in Q 2. Whence inspiration came for these can now be intelligently surmized.

To some slight extent, these proofs of the existence of vestiges of the earlier *Hamlet* strengthen Kyd's claims to its authorship. So many reminiscences of Kyd recur to the mature Elizabethan scholar in reading the spurious quarto that he is forced to the conclusion that the *Ur-Hamlet* was either written by him or by his most sedulous ape. On this score, however, I am absolved from the necessity of reviewing the evidence by the fact that it has been fully marshalled elsewhere.[77] Much more important is it that I should demonstrate (*a*)

that the spurious quarto was printed from a prompt book; and (*b*) that that prompt book was made for the use of a country company of some respectability.

(*a*) A nice distinction requires to be drawn between stage directions and prompt warnings. The two are frequently confused by indiscriminating commentators, much to the darkening of counsel. When we come across an instruction in the imperative, especially when made in advance, we may be sure that the source was a prompt book, since this is distinctively a prompt book denotement. It is also noteworthy that in the first half of the seventeenth century prompt warnings for music and noises were only slightly anticipative, generally about two lines ahead. In the spurious quarto we get a specific example of this in sc. 4, l. 402, where 'Sound Trumpets' occurs a little prematurely. That this was in accord with general practice is shown by the prompt book of *The Welsh Ambassador*, an extant manuscript whose characteristics have been so scrupulously preserved in the Malone Society's issue of the play. Five directions for flourishes are given, mostly marginal, and all are exactly two lines ahead.[78] Precisely the same measure of distance is observed in the prompt copy of Heywood's *The Captives*,[79] II, 1, in the notification 'Bell rings.' So, too, in Q 1 of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, in II, 1, we get two imperative and anticipative directions for the winding of horns.[80]

Another unmistakable prompt book indication in the spurious *Hamlet* text occurs in sc. 12, l. 1614. 'Enter Fortenbrasse, Drumme and Souldiers.' the word 'drumme' is here highly significant. It is as eloquent of its source as the 'Drum. Enter Brutus, Cassius and their Army, etc.,' of *Julius Cæsar*, V, 1, or the 'Drum and colours. Enter Menteith, Caithness, etc.,' of *Macbeth* V, 2. No mere shorthand-writer, taking down a play for publication, would have troubled to note that Fortinbras and his men were preceded by a drummer. The indication is not essential for the better understanding of the reader, and is not to be found in either of the genuine texts.

(*b*) When we come to look for evidence demonstrating that the *Hamlet* prompt book was made for a country company of some superiority in point of numbers, though possibly not in quality, it is not very difficult to find. The chief argument against the preparation of the spurious text for publication—the cutting and slashing of all the great speeches—is also the chief argument in favour of its preparation for rural performance. Actions speak louder than words, and for a country audience there was a trifle too many words in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. All that the average audience of the sort demanded was a rattling good story dramatically told, and that, even in this case, it was given. It might of course be reasonably argued that the drastic abbreviation of most of the long speeches was due in great part to

the necessity of making things easy for a body of inexperienced players, and it behoves us therefore to look for evidence establishing beyond doubt that the text of the play was fashioned with an eye to the likings and dislikings and the deficiencies of the average rural audience. Obviously, all topical allusions of a transient parochial order calculated to tickle the ears of the stage stoolholders at the Globe would have to go by the board. Hence we find the country Hamlet making no promise to the players that the humorous man should end his part in peace, an allusion no more comprehensible by a rural audience than it was until recently by ourselves. Simplification also occurs. Never having gone the rounds of the London theatres, Hodge could hardly be expected to know who the groundlings were, consequently the young prince, in his address to the players, takes care to refer to them as 'the ignorant.' To the same intelligence was the particular appeal of his assertion that he'd 'rather heare a town bull bellow' than listen to a ranter bawling out his lines. It is likewise significant that, in the play-scene, sundry classical references have been put into familiar language, just as in the episode of the two portraits no allusion is made to Hyperion or Mercury. So, too, when one finds Ophelia making clumsy substitution of 'a cunning sophister' for 'some ungracious pastors' (sc. iii, l. 344), one suspects, not reversion to the primitive text, but a deliberate softening, so as to avoid giving offence to

country clergymen. Experience had probably taught that it was bad policy to reflect upon the cloth. Is it not on record that at Beaminster in 1630, the local parson took means to suppress a travelling puppet show, and that Sands the showman went to law with him about the matter? [81]

Equally revealing are some of the omissions in the spurious quarto. It is vital to stress the fact that nowhere throughout, either in text or stage direction, do we get any indication of the firing of ordnance. This naturally arouses speculation, since in the Shakespearean play there was prime necessity for the letting off of chambers four several times, viz., at I, 4, 6, and V, 2, 288, 294, and 414. It was not as if the equivalences in Q 1 were derived from the *Ur-Hamlet*: it is plainly to be seen that at these particular junctures the adapter was following the current Shakespearean text. In sc. 17,[82] which is roughly the analogue of V, 2, 294, there is not alone no firing, but neither drum nor trumpet, a clear indication that all the members of the company were on the stage and that nobody was available for the martial music. The best of strollers often found themselves in such straits. In accord with his extraordinary theory, Dr. Van Dam accounts for the silence of the chambers by surmizing that on the occasion when the shorthand-writer took down the play, the Globe players had suddenly run short of gunpowder and so found themselves unable to let off the usual shots! Never was there hypothesis that

put a greater strain on normal credibility. To my mind, the solution lies in the fact that country strollers reduced their impedimenta to the severest limits, and, in all probability, did not trouble to take chambers with them. Often they performed in town halls and rooms of lesser size, places where the firing of these small pieces of ordnance was objectionable, not only because of the noise and the stench and the smoke, but because of the risk of serious accident. Even in the open inn-yards in London sundry spectators had already been injured 'by engynes, weapons and powder used in plaies.' [83]

Another point that demands some pondering is that whereas in Q 2 Hamlet is implied to be a man of thirty, in Q 1 he is no more than nineteen, and, accordingly, not 'fat and scant of breath.' The spurious text, indeed, goes so far as to stress his youth: in the closet scene (line 1451), the Queen rebukes him with 'How now, boy?' We cannot be sure, of course, that in this presentation of a juvenile prince there was not some harking back to first principles (though, personally, I think it highly improbable); but, whether there was or was not, it is reasonable to believe that the fashioner of the play approximated the years of Hamlet to the years of his coming representative. This is no mere begging of the question. There are indications that the adaptation was made, not for a newly organized body of players, but for a troupe of country performers already active, that the adapter was conversant with

the size and the characteristics of the company for which he was working. In a version of a popular play made for country use one looks for some cutting of the characters, but in this play, despite an obvious seeking after brevity, none of Shakespeare's *dramatis personæ* has been omitted. No doubt, in those days both in town and country, a good deal of doubling took place, but the strollers who played *Hamlet* must have been over a dozen in number, since there were at least thirteen people on the stage at the close of the last scene, ten of whom were speakers.

There is difficulty in determining what was the average number of players in a strolling company at the beginning of the seventeenth century. To draw analogies from the practice of regular London companies when driven to travel by the repressions of the plague is to fall into error. In a London company there was a considerable number of sharers, each of whom got a certain proportion of the daily profits; in a country company was a master who took all the receipts and maintained the players. Hence, strollers could afford to travel in larger bodies than could the regular city players. We find a troupe of ten acting at Münster in Germany in 1599,[84] and, if ten then could risk going so far afield, a dozen or more might with equal safety band together at home. In 1619, there were fifteen players in a specific country company,[85] and in 1621 a licence issued to some strollers limited their

number to eighteen.[86] Beyond these facts little can be gleaned concerning the composition and practices of early itinerants save what Dekker, when in facetious mood, reveals in his pamphlets. There is surely prime significance in the following passage from Dekker's *The Wonderful Yeare*, indited in 1603:

'The worst players Boy stood vpon his good parts, swearing tragicall and busking oathes, that how vilainously soeuer he randed, or what bad and vnlawfull action soeuer he entred into, he would in despite of his honest audience be halfe a sharer (at leaste) at home, or else strowle (thats to say trauell) with some notorious wicked floundring company abroad.'

In a company in which Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, was personated by a stripling, there could have been few, if any, players of maturity or experience. Dekker here indicates how these strolling bands were recruited. In *Newes from Hell* (1606), he gives us an insight into their economy in making fantastic allusion to 'a companie of country players, being nine in number, one sharer and the rest Jorneymen.' It would appear that the journeymen seldom saw the colour of money, for in Dekker's *The Belman of London* we get a reference to strollers travelling 'upon the hard hoofe from village to village for cheese and buttermilke,' evidently contented enough, so long as they were housed and fed. If we ask how risk of frequent disruption was avoided, we get an answer from some facts elicited

at a trial in Banbury in 1633, which reveal that a certain Richard Bradshaw's strollers were all duly apprenticed to him for seven years, and got nothing but meat and drink for their services.[87]

I take leave to think that the day is not far distant when scholars will be consumed by a desire to know for what particular country company, whether Lord Edward Dudley's, Lord Vaux's, Lord Berkeley's or another's, the composite *Hamlet* text was made. For thereby of a surety hangs a tale—if one were only in a position to tell it. In my paper on 'The Date of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*,' I have advanced evidence demonstrating that the great tragedy was produced in 1600, most likely some time before August, and that the discussion of the popularity of the young eyases was added to the text in or about the May of the year following. Since the spurious text presents a summary of this addition, the inference would be that it was not used for acting purposes before the middle of 1601. Bearing that conclusion well in mind, let us look microscopically at the familiar statement on its title-page:

'As it hath beene diuerse times acted by his Highnesse seruants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Vniuersities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where.'

In more ways than one there has been woeful misreading of this (what appears to me) purposely ambiguous statement. To begin with, it is a mistake to take the term University in its literal sense; here, as

in James the First's patent to the Chamberlain's Men constituting them his own players,[88] it meant nothing more than university towns. To me now, it is not at all surprising that the vigorous research made in the academic archives of Oxford and Cambridge for evidence that Shakespeare's company played *Hamlet* before the pundits has proved fruitless. None but Payne Collier among Elizabethan investigators has had the faculty of finding what could not possibly exist. The most serious blunder, however, has been the complete oversight of the subtle disjunctiveness of the colon in the title-page statement. To get at the truth we must read between the lines and take the second clause to mean 'as also [by other players] in the two Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and elsewhere.' I feel assured, if it could be established that, some time late in 1601 or during 1602, some particular country company acted in the towns of both Oxford and Cambridge, we should then have, not only reasonable confirmation of the underlying truth of the title-page statement, but a strong clue to the original owners of the spurious text. One has only to assume that the strollers who sold the prompt copy to the publishers were the sole authority for the secondary statement to see how the whole came to be framed ambiguously. Definition would have been tantamount to open confession of piracy on the part of the players, and the publishers would have figured as accessories after the fact.

THE GHOST IN *HAMLET*

IF science to-day is the only absolute monarch and threatens by its tyrannies to nullify art, those who resent its arbitrary rulings have at least the poor consolation of knowing that it must follow the course of all absolute monarchies and go by the board. Never, perhaps, was there so magnificent an impostor. It affects to lighten us of our burdens but only succeeds in increasing the weight. Life, being the supreme paradox, cannot be regulated by square and compass; and science, in striving to reconcile its inconsistencies, is bound by its inherent logicality to defeat its own ends. It is a cynical conjuror temporarily deluding our senses with iris-tinted dissolving views, only to demonstrate at the finish that the hope held out by these alluring colour-harmonies has no more solid basis than a few fragments of coloured glass in a kaleidoscope. It has destroyed our imaginations and given us nothing in exchange. Negation has superseded belief; we have been tricked into dropping the substance for the shadow.

Science, in occasionally transcending the impossible, affects to make all possible, but only succeeds in furthering incredulity. We concede the dramatist fewer postulates than of yore because we have no longer any imagination to place at his disposal.

In the theatre common experience is the test of possibility: the traffic of the scene must be wholly concerned with the axiomatic. The conditions are hostile to the creation of a new poetic drama and unfavourable to the conservation of the old. Extraordinary indeed is the paradox which presents itself once we look at the matter concretely. For example, we who know full well from Dewar's demonstrations how readily gases can be converted into solids have actually proceeded to deny to Shakespeare the right to make ghosts manifest. Pegasus is to be shorn of his wings and be compelled to obey the rule of the road.

If our reverence for Shakespeare is anything more than lip-worship, the time has come for crying a halt to the double-quick of the iconoclasts. Experimentation upon him has practically reached breaking-point, a left-handed compliment, since the dramatic cause which depends upon mere novelty of exposition is a poor cause, a cause without root in the public mind. Not that purposelessness has always marked or is at present wholly characteristic of these innovations. For a score of years past there has been evinced by producers in certain centres of the English-speaking world a steady disposition to suppress in whole or part the visible presence of the ghost in *Hamlet*, the one ghost, be it noted, in the wide expanse of dramatic literature of which it has been fittingly said that it alone is 'a ghost with a personality.' Fortified by the growing impression

in ultra-modern minds that there are in reality two spectres in the tragedy, a true and a false, and that the impostor figures in the Closet Scene, the iconoclasts, with that arresting actor, Sir John Martin Harvey at their head, began their tinkering with that scene. The supposed subjective ghost of Hamlet's imagining was reduced to *vox et præterea nihil*, a mere gramophone record. One knows not whether this was widely approved, but there is certainly no evidence of disapproval; on the contrary, as time passed, advantage was taken of the inertia of the public mind to go the whole hog. Not only the assumably false but the admittedly true ghost was denied authority 'to walk the night.' The *reductio ad absurdum* was fearlessly made at the Sam H. Harris Theatre, New York, in November, 1922, in a revolutionary and highly successful revival of the tragedy, in which the majesty of buried Denmark took a leaf out of Barrie's book and emulated the example of Tinker Bell. All that remained of 'that fair and warlike form' which so convinced Horatio of its identity was a ray of light and a voice.[89] An imaginative appeal truly, but, as I hope to show, an appeal subversive of the poet's intention.

Experience and the trend of the times constitute the guiding star of the Shakespearean producer. Challenge him for wilfully ignoring expounders of the text, academic and popular, and most probably he will reply that few books share the merits of Richmond Noble's *Shakespeare's Use of Song*, and

have a practical as well as an æsthetic side. One recalls in this connection how Dickens, in his will, prayed his children to read their Bible, and not to permit any man to put his gloss upon it. Lying at the back of the producer's mind is the idea that the best authority on Shakespeare is Shakespeare himself, and in that, though he seldom lives up to it, he is right. Counsel's opinion is no doubt valuable, but the case can only be settled in that final court of appeal presided over by the Quartos and the Folio. The truth will emerge and conquer by convincing if the advocate takes care to stick to his brief; special pleading has been the curse of Shakespearean exegesis.

By a strict obeyal of this precept, and by considering the play purely in an historical spirit (which means bringing a synthetic Elizabethan mind to bear upon an Elizabethan product), I hope to make Shakespeare speak for himself, to educe some, and not the least important, of his intentions when he excogitated *Hamlet*. If the old texts deliver a true message—and, so far as this particular investigation is concerned, not having been puzzled by discrepancies, I have had no occasion to challenge their authority—there is only one ghost in the play, an objective ghost of an amplified Senecan order, whose visible presence throughout is an essential factor in the conduct of the general scheme. The distinction to be made between the ghost of the battlements and the ghost of the Closet Scene—a distinction

which can be shown to have been made originally—is not a matter of contrasting the real and the imaginary, but a matter of vesture. This point, though inferior only in importance to the visible presence of the ghost, has long been lost sight of through the departure from prescript made by the Restoration players, a stupid lapse which crystallized into a tradition, and was reverently maintained well up to within living memory. There is justification for the ghost's appearance in the Closet Scene, but none for his appearance in armour. Hamlet says, 'my father, in his habit as he lived,' and armour is not a habit. Shakespeare styles it harness. No one ever passed his days in armour: a diver does not live in his submarine attire nor a fireman in his helmet.

Here the text is borne out by a direction in the spurious First Quarto, a direction none the less valuable and informative because it is not to be found in the genuine texts and comes from a tainted source: 'Enter the ghost in his night gowne.'[90] We shall see later that the ghost had a purpose in appearing in panoply in the earlier scenes, and that this purpose had been fully served once the dread revelation to Hamlet had been made. As to the argued subjectivity of the spectre in the Closet Scene, surely, if it had been a simple conjuration of Hamlet's brain, it would have been conjured up as it was seen before, but Hamlet is clearly surprised at its change of garb. His assurance to his mother:

Ecstasy!
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time
And makes as healthful music,

is likewise an assurance to us that he was not the victim of self-delusion. But the sticklers for subjectivity refuse the proffer on the plea that the real ghost, having nothing new to convey, had no occasion to come back. That, in a sense, is a valid argument, though it only serves to obscure Shakespeare's intention. Shakespeare foresaw that objection when he made the ghost say:

Do not forget: this visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.

But that was not his real reason for bringing on the ghost at this juncture. His real reason, which was to precipitate the catastrophe, rendered it vital that the majestic shade of buried Denmark should be seen and heard only by his son. Viewed by the purely modern intelligence, as it is mostly now viewed, this reservation places the ghost in the category of the subjective. But Shakespeare happened to be writing for the mediæval-minded, and the classification is erroneous. Let us not forget that early stage conventions dealing with the supernatural were based on popular belief, otherwise they would never have proved acceptable or understandable. Judging by what was shown on the stage a little before and a little after *Hamlet* saw the light, there must have been a common superstition to the effect that most

supernatural visitants, including angels, devils and ghosts, had the power of making themselves visible and audible to certain selected persons in a group while remaining unseen and unheard by the others. Thus in Heywood's *King Edward IV, Part II*, a play which slightly preceded *Hamlet*, one notes that the messenger who arrives in the fourth act, while the glib-tongued, torch-carrying ghost of Friar Anselm holds the stage, is utterly ignorant of the spectre's presence. In a later play, Chapman's *Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, we cannot assume otherwise than that the ghost of Bussy is substantive, since at the beginning of the fourth act it delivers a long soliloquy more or less directly to the audience. Yet, when it appears before the Guise and Clermont and addresses itself to the latter with the view of whetting *his* blunted purpose, the Guise hears nothing and marvels why his companion is so perturbed. Here the analogy with the Closet Scene in *Hamlet* is perfect. So, too, in *The Birth of Merlin*, there is quaint discrimination in the third act, for, whereas the clown hears the devil's voice without seeing him, he is both seen and heard by the clown's sisters.

To return to the Closet Scene. It was vitally necessary for the furtherance of the plot that the ghost should appear at this particular juncture and that the queen should be oblivious of its presence. She is wavering as to whom her allegiance should be given, to her husband or her son, and Hamlet's apparent madness in bending his eye on vacancy,

and holding discourse with the incorporal air, loads the dice against him. In striving to save her he has lost her; and the price of her misconception is her life.

Just another word on the vexed question of subjectivity. Here, if we are to arrive at any definite conclusion, historical criticism must displace logic. Circumstances demanded that the early Elizabethan stage ghost, or, to speak by the card, the ghost of sixteenth-century English drama, should be wholly objective. It was not till the close of Shakespeare's second period that the subjective ghost somewhat timidly emerged, so timidly that it never fully succeeded in ousting its predecessor. To say this is to fly in the face of received opinion and deny that the ghost in *Julius Cæsar* is subjective. Fortified by the facts, I resolutely take that attitude. The primary denotement of the subjective ghost was its silence—about the only trustworthy test—and the type is not to be traced earlier than in *Macbeth*. Moreover, for aught we know to the contrary, the subjectivity of Banquo's shade may have been matter of belated revision.

The defect in the Elizabethan stage ghost was that it never became properly psychologized. Subjectivity and objectivity were constantly confused. Careful planning at the outset was precluded by the circumstance that ghostly procedure was a ready-made convention. Springing initially from Seneca, it was a graft from the arid neo-classical drama of the academies. As it happened, the ponderous,

oratorical Senecan ghost presented nothing that outraged the belief of the credulous and highly superstitious masses. For them, had it not been in existence, it would practically have had to be created, since in their minds there was only one type of ghost, the objective type. It was for this reason that, no matter what the particular conception of the dramatist, all ghosts had to be materialized. Poets to whom spectral objectivity was anathema readily availed themselves of the method of indicating subjectivity by means of the materialized dream, a popular convention none too neatly adopted by Shakespeare in *Richard III*. Even, however, in this refuge confusion of thought obtruded itself. The dream was sometimes allowed to develop into reality. Thus, in Heywood's *If You Know not Me, You Know Nobody*, Part I, there is a dream scene in the course of which an angel leaves a Bible in the sleeping queen's lap, to be found by her and commented upon on waking. Analagous blemishes occur in the dream scenes in *Cymbeline* and *The Roman Actor*. Tourneur makes progression and evinces subtlety of mind in *The Atheist's Tragedie*, but even he is not able to avoid all confusion of idea. The ghost of Montferres is seen in this, appearing now to the sleeping and now to the waking intelligence of Clerimont, its son, with this distinction, that it is only to the sleeping intelligence it addresses itself in speech. Here the modern sense of subjectivity is in nowise exceeded, but the illusion is not sustained with equal care

throughout. Later, when the ghost makes its appearance before Clerimont and the sentinel, both see it, and the sentinel pierces it unavailingly with a bullet. So, too, while it is clearly Webster's aim in *The White Devil* to deal exclusively with the subjective in presenting severally the ghosts of Isabella and Brachiano, he likewise merges suddenly into the objective in making the shade of Brachiano cast earth upon Flamineo. This grave lapse recalls the odd act of the ghost in *Locrine* in striking Strumbo on the head when he offers to give the starving Humber food.[91] There is room for the suspicion that these concessions to the popular mind were as often as not mere playhouse interpolations.

Be that as it may, it is idle to apply the foot-rule of modern metaphysics to Elizabethan stage concepts. One must take the early dramatist as one finds him, give him what he asks for or allow him to sleep in peace. There is no honourable middle course.

And now to finish with the crux in *Hamlet*. There yet remains to be demonstrated the prime necessity of discrimination in the matter of the ghost's attire. Since the dawn-of-the-century stage ghost was almost absurdly conventional, we have to ask ourselves: Why this departure from the normally attired spectre, the spectre so bluntly stigmatized in the induction to *A Warning for Fair Women* as 'lapt in some foul sheet or a leather pitch' to come screaming in with cries of 'Vindicta! revenge, revenge'? Has it any significance beyond mere whim or a de-

sire for novelty? Assuredly, it has. There was purpose in the ghost's haunting of the battlements in armour, though that purpose has been long obscured by sundry pedantic commentators who have discoursed irrelevantly about the old custom (somewhere and somewhen) of burying warriors in panoply. If the murdered king were so buried, it is surprising that Hamlet, on first seeing his ghost, should ask why he had 'burst his cerements,' and marvel over beholding him 'again in complete steel.' Why 'again' if he had seen him 'quietly inurned' in it? And how did the ghost manage to burst the cerements while still retaining the armour?

To reveal the absurdity of this line of thought, it is only necessary to point out that it is the guise in which the ghost appears rather than the ghost itself which arouses speculation. Hamlet indicates this when he speaks of the ghost's coming in 'questionable shape,' otherwise vesture which sets the mind wondering and provokes inquiry. 'Shape' was an old theatrical term signifying dress, though now and again it was used in the sense of disguise. Thus, in the list of *dramatis personæ* prefixed to *The Virgin Martyr*, Harpax, an evil spirit, is described as 'in the shape of a secretary.'[92] What we require to grasp is that the shade of the murdered king dons armour for a certain purpose, and that his purpose is served once he makes his dread and disastrous revelation to his son. His aim in walking the battlements is to use the watch as unsuspecting instruments. It is his

purpose to arouse speculation as to the why and wherefore of his coming without affording any clue to his real reason. His appearance in complete steel is admirably calculated to accomplish all this. Horatio at once falls headlong into the trap, and in the act of falling, drags the others with him. He notes that the apparition of the dead king wears

> the very armour he had on
> When he the ambitious Norway combated,

and proceeds to augur from this some ill-boding against the welfare of the State. There are whispers of a blow to be struck soon by young Fortinbras in attempted recovery of his father's lost lands. Bernardo forthwith puts two and two together:

> Well may it sort, that this portentous figure
> Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
> That was, and is, the question of these wars.

Nothing could be better calculated to serve the ghost's purpose, but he is not really worrying about affairs of State, and says nothing whatever about them in his interview with his son. His ends are accomplished once he had divulged the circumstances of his murder and urged Hamlet to revenge: the rest will follow in inevitable sequence. Having no thoughts of the possibility of the young prince's procrastination, he does not purpose returning, and takes a long farewell:

> Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me.

The certain term he is compelled to walk the night has not yet expired, but he need no longer haunt the battlements, and he need no longer wear armour. We are to assume, having evidence warranting that assumption, that thenceforth he revisited the glimpses of the moon 'in his habit as he lived.' But the stars were ranged against him, and had ordained the destruction of his dynasty. It was unfortunate that Hamlet should have had the crucial interview with his mother at an hour when the ghost was free to be present, 'the very witching time of night, when churchyards yawn,' since, not content with listening, the still-tortured spirit impulsively intervenes. Mark the irony of the situation. In striving to save the queen suffering by not making himself apparent to her, he only precipitates disaster. The mother is thereby convinced of the madness of her son, and takes sides against him. The lesson of the tragedy is the futility of revenge. There was inevitability in the failure of the ghost's mission: 'Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.'

If such were Shakespeare's intentions in writing *Hamlet*, the inference is clear. Any performance of the play which fails to show the visible presence of the ghost in all his scenes or to discriminate between the armoured ghost of the opening act and the gowned ghost of the Closet Scene is profanation, an insult to the Master's intelligence and dishonour to his memory.

SHAKESPEARE ON MASKS

MUCH as there has been written about Shakespeare and his works, considering that the poet has been viewed and reviewed from all sorts of possible and impossible standpoints, it is astonishing that nobody has drawn attention to a certain curious trend of thought pursued by him in the earlier part of his dramatic career. For a whole decade, starting from 1594, he is to be found constantly ruminating upon the mask, both concretely and as a symbol, now weaving it into the fabric of *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Much Ado About Nothing*, and anon striving to rid himself of its obsessions by giving his thoughts substantive life in vivid tropes. What was precisely the impelling cause of all this it were idle to attempt to determine, but it is germane to recall that the foreign fashion of mask-wearing spread to England in the poet's boyhood, and, so far as women of quality were concerned, soon became a regular feature of open-air life. Stow tells us that:

'Womens Maskes, Buskes, Mufs, Fanns, Perewigs, and Bodkins were first devised and used in Italy by Curtezans, and from thence brought into France, and from thence they came into England about the time of the Massacre in Paris.'[93]

Masks were of more than one kind,[94] but the commoner kind was known as a vizard, and, like a latterday schoolboy's 'false face,' obscured the entire features. It not only served a purpose on occasion for which the parasol is better adapted, but secured for its wearer an almost thorough privacy. In the boxes of the playhouse, when assailed from the stage by a volley of salacious equivokes, my lady fair blushed composedly behind it.[95] Its usefulness, indeed, was such that it came to stay.

To grasp the nature of the old vizard is to read more than one Shakespearean riddle. Made, as a rule, of black velvet on a moulded leather base, the vizard was kept securely in position by a tongue or inner projection held firmly in the mouth. These are simple details, but they give point to a certain long-baffling passage-at-arms in *Love's Labour's Lost*:[96]

> *Kath.* What! was your visor made without a tongue?
> *Long.* I know the reason, lady, why you ask.
> *Kath.* O! for the reason; quickly, sir; I long.
> *Long.* You have a double tongue within your mask.
> And would afford my speechless visor half.

Oh, these commentators, these commentators! The late Mr. H. C. Hart, while editing and annotating *Love's Labour's Lost* for the useful Arden series, was rash enough to characterize this neat morsel of verbal carte and tierce 'insipid conversation.' But one hardly knows which is the greater offence, to fail to see any point whatever in a dis-

tinctly witty passage or to find allusiveness where allusion there is none. Often, as the maltreated poet himself puts it, 'light seeking light doth light of light beguile,' and we even find Professor Dover Wilson, past-master of Shakespearean exegesis though he be, occasionally 'climbing o'er the house to unlock the little gate.' Consider, for example, his interpretation of the following passage from Act II, sc. 4, of *Measure for Measure*, as set out at length in the New Cambridge recension of the play:

> 'Thus wisdom wishes to appear most bright,
> When it doth tax itself; as these black masks
> Proclaim an enshield beauty ten times louder
> Than beauty could, displayed.'

We are told with confident assurance that in these lines lie embedded a cryptic topical allusion, that they were added to the text when the play was acted before the King at Whitehall on December 26, 1604, and that the allusion was to Jonson's *Masque of Blackness*, which, it is to be noted, was not performed until January 6 following. Without pausing to reflect that a topical allusion to an event is generally wise enough to preserve silence until the event comes off, Mr. Dover Wilson goes on placidly to argue that 'these black masks' refers to the vizards worn by the daughters of Niger in Jonson's masque, and, with misplaced ingenuity, explains 'enshield beauty'—on the assumption that the adjective is a corruption of *enshelled*—as an allusion to the ap-

pearance of the Queen and her retinue of lady-masquers in a vast scallop shell.

All this is pure fallacy. The most remarkable thing about this masque was that the ladies in it wore no masks. Carleton, writing to Winwood while the topic was still red-hot, says, in describing the performance:

'Their apparell was rich, but too light and curtizan-like for such great ones. Instead of vizzards, their faces and arms up to the elbows, were painted black, which was disguise sufficient, for they were hard to be known; but it became them nothing so well as their red and white, and you cannot imagine a more ugly sight, then a troop of lean-cheek'd Moors.[97]

The truth of the matter is that Shakespeare's lines, so far from being intended to convey any narrow allusiveness, were based on common knowledge and presented nothing that the average groundling, ignorant of courts and courtly entertainments, could have failed to understand. Professor Dover Wilson should have recalled that vizards in those days were usually black, a circumstance giving point to the lines in the opening scene of *Romeo and Juliet*:

'These happy masks that kiss fair ladies' brows
Being black put us in mind they hide the fair.'

Other passages in the contemporary drama emphasize this fact. Philip in *The Two Angry Women of Abington*,[98] in soliloquizing, says:

'How like a beauteous lady masked in black
Looks that same large circumference of Heaven!
The sky, that was so fair three hours ago,
Is in three hours become an Ethiop;'

As for the phrase 'enshield beauty,' so puzzling to commentators in general and so brilliantly misinterpreted by Mr. Dover Wilson in particular, its meaning becomes clear once we recognize that 'enshield ' is simply an elided poetic form of 'enshielded.' Recall how Julia in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* characterizes her neglected vizard as 'sun-expelling'; also how Cressida avows that she relies upon her mask to protect her beauty. Which goes to say that in the last analysis the safest commentator on Shakespeare is Shakespeare himself, Not, of course, that he suffers from poverty of resource. Though, basically, there is iteration of idea here, elsewhere the poet is to be found ringing the changes on the theme with consummate ease. A good many of these philosophizings, some perplexingly recondite and nearly all caviare to the general, occur in *Love's Labour's Lost*; and this quality of obsolescence, combined with other deterrents, has, no doubt, played its part in keeping Shakespeare's gossamer comedy off the modern stage. Clear enough, however, is Boyet's simile:

'Fair ladies, mask'd, are roses in their bud;
Dismask'd, their damask sweet commixture shown
Are angels vailing clouds or roses blown.'

Like the fan, which may be said to have crossed the Channel in the same boat, the vizard, save in masquing time, was woman's prerogative. Consequently, in Shakespeare, the mask-wearing male is much less delicately handled. Rosaline speaks of Berowne's visor as

> —'That superfluous case,
> That hid the worse and show'd the better face'

Superfluous, not only because of her pretence that there was no handsomeness to hide, but because the face itself was a mask. We get the idea which lurks here more lambently expressed when Romeo calls:

> 'Give me a case to put my visage in (*masks*)
> A visor for a visor. What care I
> What curious eye doth quote deformities,
> Here are the beetle brows shall blush for me.'

In neither instance does there appear to be a play on the term 'a case of vizards,' referring to an arrangement of two masks so that the wearer had a face front and back. Stage use was made of this device by Jonson in *The Poetaster*, where Cæsar bids the lictors gag Tucca,

> 'And put a case of vizards o're his head,
> That he may looke bi-fronted, as he speakes.'[99]

Finally, it is in his broodings over the mask that Shakespeare, in momentarily peeping out from behind his characters, unconsciously reveals himself.

If there is one thing more than another that one becomes convinced of after a profound study of Shakespeare's plays, it is his belief in the necessity of strong lines of social demarcation, in the virtue of everybody knowing his place and keeping it. Anything of the nature of communism was to him abomination. One feels assured that his sentiments on that score are crystallized in Ulysses' dictum in *Troilus and Cressida*:

> 'Degree being vizarded,
> The unworthiest shows as fairly in the mask.'

WINDOWS IN SHAKESPEARE

THE highest intellectual pleasures are seldom easy to attain, but they are worth the seeking since of all the delights that life vouchsafes they are the purest and most lasting. To understand and relish Shakespeare with some of the gusto with which his immediate public understood and relished him demands a nodding acquaintance with the manners and customs, and, above all, the phraseology and idioms of his times. Simple words of which the import seems at first glance to lie on the surface are used by him in a plurality of senses, and, when one of the senses has happened to become obsolete, confusion is apt to arise in the mind of the unskilled reader. True, some of the commentators, a small proportion of the motley group, have prepared the way for a royal road to knowledge, but many rocks remain to be blasted and many quagmires to be removed before all the world and his wife get easy travel. Over Shakespeare's varying use of so innocent looking a word as 'window' there has been, for example, much barking of erudite shins. Even with the New Oxford Dictionary at our command we moderns have woefully failed to grasp that the word in Elizabethan days had two widely different, almost antithetical, meanings. Generally speaking, it implied then, as it does now, an opening for the admission of light, but when applied to shops it re-

ferred to the solid wooden shutter with which the trader shut up his stall.[100] We get clear employment of the word in this latter sense in the last act of Ford's *The Fancies Chaste and Noble*, where Secco, the barber, in proceeding to operate upon Shadow, turgidly warns him to

> 'Wink fast with both eyes; the ingredients to the composition of this ball are most odorous camphire, pure soap of Venice, oil of sweet almonds, with the spirit of alum; they will search and smart shrewdly, if you keep not the shop-windows of your head close.'

Earlier dramatists were not always as careful to use the compound-phrase, probably because it was somewhat too prosaic to harmonize with poetic diction, and considerable obscuration has consequently ensued. Shakespeare, when metaphor-hunting, employs the simple substantive in both its senses, sometimes the one and sometimes the other, much to the unsophisticated reader's bedevilment.[101] Clearly, when he writes in *Richard III* of 'those windows that let forth life' or makes Berowne style his eye 'the window of my heart,' he is thinking of apertures, but in a good many other cases where he used the term his mind is dwelling on shop-shutters. To recognize this is to travel more than half-way towards a complete understanding of Iachimo's glowing description of the sleeping Imogen, that cluster of gems whose rays have dazzled the weak eyes of many a learned commen-

tator and caused the spilling of much good ink:

> 'Tis her breathing that
> Perfumes the chamber thus. The flame o' the taper
> Bows towards her, and would underpeep her lids
> To see th' enclosed lights, now canopied
> Under those windows, white and azure lac'd
> With blue of heaven's own tinct.'

It is astonishing to learn from Mr. Bernard Shaw that when Sir Henry Irving was engaged rehearsing *Cymbeline* for production at the Lyceum, he proposed cutting these lines out of his own part, and was only prevented from doing so by being told by a friend whose knowledge and taste he respected that there were few more beautiful passages in Shakespeare.[102] As it happens, in this particular case, we can watch the poet at work and get at the back of his mind. In part, inspiration suddenly came from a well-remembered old ballad. First published as a broadside in 1582, and not long afterwards embalmed in the well-thumbed pages of *A Handefull of Pleasant Delites*, this simple yet appealing ditty was described as 'A Sonnet of a Lover in the Praise of his Lady,' but soon came to be known by the name of the haunting Irish melody to which it was set, a circumstance due to the fact that the name formed its mysterious, alluring refrain. The old Gaelic song, of which the music has come down to us, was called 'Cailin og a stór,' or, in plain Saxon, 'Young Girl, my treasure,' but this Eliza-

bethan usage had corrupted into 'Calleno casture me' (with variants).[103] Just as the word Mesopotamia had so comforting a sound to the biblical-minded old lady, so too, it would appear, much of the charm of the naïve old English ballad lay in the perpetual recurrence of the mystic Gaelic phrase. This is how the song began:

When as I view your comely grace,
Calen O custure me,
Your golden haires, your angel's face,
Calen O custure me,
Your azured veines much like the skies,
Calen O custure me,
Your silver teeth, your christale eies,
Calen O custure me,
Your corall lips, your crimson cheeks,
Calen O custure me,
That gods and men both love and leekes,
Calen O custure me
Your pretty mouth with divers gifts,
Calen O custure me,
Which driveth wise men to their shifts;
Calen O custure me,
So brave, so fine, so trim, so young,
Calen O Custure me
With heavenly wit and pleasant tongue,
Calen O custure me,
That Pallas, though she did excell,
Calen O custure me,
Could frame ne tell a tale so well,
Calen O custure me.

One cannot tell how this simple thing came to wind itself round Shakespeare's heart, but wind itself it did. Some of its very phrasing lay for long deeply imbedded in his mind. When we seek primary proof of his acquaintance with the ballad we find it in that amusing scene in the fourth act of *Henry V* where Pistol is so mightily mystified by the foreign lingo of his French prisoner, and, on being addressed as a 'gentilhomme de bonne qualité' is reminded of something familiar by the sound of that *qualité*, and ejaculates 'Caleno custure me.' A good many years have now elapsed since it was first seen how the old song serves to put point into that episode, but it has not been yet seen that it is equally helpful in clearing up the obscurity in Iachimo's speech. The ballad-writer, in dwelling upon the pretty girl's features, refers to her 'azured veines much like the skies,' a simile recalled by Shakespeare and echoed in the lines:

> Under these windows, white and azure-laced,
> With blue of heaven's own tinct.

Iachimo was marvelling over the beauty of Imogen's delicate eyelids with their blue-veined lacing. What the ballad taught Shakespeare, Shakespeare taught Keats, for the passage from *Cymbeline* is equally elucidated by Keats's:

> 'And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep.'

Out of all this there emerges a curious puzzle. Conside the lines in *Venus and Adonis*:

'The night of sorrow now is turned to day;
Her two blue windows faintly she up-heaveth,
Like the fair sun, when on his fresh array,
He cheers the morn and all the earth relieveth:
And as the bright sun glorifies the sky
So is her face illumin'd with her eye.'

Nobody has ever found any mystification here because nobody takes the meaning to be otherwise than obvious, but what we require to ask ourselves is, What is the significance of the 'two blue windows'? Is the reference, as I take it to be, to Venus's eyelids, or, as commonly interpreted, to her eyes? Some little bolstering can be given to the unsuspected reading. Shakespeare, we know, was an admirer of Marlowe, and, as it happens, Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* presents a striking reversal of the picture drawn in *Venus and Adonis*, the passage being otherwise noteworthy for affording precedent for the poetic employment of the shop-window metaphor:

O highest lamp of ever-living Jove,
Accursed day! infected with my griefs,
Hide now thy stained face in endless night,
And shut the windows of the lightsome heavens![104]

Apart from the possible influence of Marlowe, it is necessary to bear in mind that elsewhere, when Shakespeare applies the word 'windows' to the face, the allusion is always to the eyelids. Friar Lawrence reminds one somewhat more pungently of the Marlovian passage when he says:

'—thy eyes' windows fall
Like death when he shuts up the day of life.'

There is infinite pathos in Charmian's farewell to Cleopatra as, in paying her the last loyalty, she murmurs:

'Downy windows close,
And golden Phoebus never be beheld
Of eyes again so royal.'

Shakespeare, it is to be noted, enjoyed no monopoly of this figure of speech. Dekker was so fertile in fancy that he had no difficulty in turning it to individual advantage. There is a scene in *Old Fortunatus*[105] where Andelocia and Ampedo fall into a heavy, mysterious sleep just after Fortunatus' death, only to be rudely awakened by Shadow, their man. Both are puzzled to know what has become of their father's corpse, not knowing that it had been spirited away while they slept, and Ampedo accounts for his ignorance by explaining that 'a leaden slumber pressed mine eyes.' On which the authentic voice of Dekker is heard in Shadow's comment: 'Whether it were lead or latten that hasped down those winking casements, I know not, but I found you both snorting.'

Downy windows! Winking casements! Was there ever such another period when poets big and little were inspired to such audacities? The trope of to-day is icily regular and splendidly null. For the law of writ and liberty—especially liberty—these Elizabethans are your only men.

NOTES

[1]For a more exhaustive account of the history and influence of doubling, see my lecture on the subject in *Pre-Restoration Stage Studies*.

[2]First pointed out by Mr. Richard Davey in *The Stratford Town Shakespeare*. It has been assumed on somewhat slender evidence that John Sincklo was this thin player. *Cf.* Mr. G. B. Harrison on 'Shakespeare's Actors' in *Shakespeare and the Theatre* (Shakespeare Association Papers, 1927).

[3]*Cf.* my article on 'The Mechanics of Elizabethan Playwriting' in *The Athenæum* for April 30, 1920, p. 575, and the correspondence evoked in the issues for May 7 and 14 following.

[4]*Cf.* R. Crompton Rhodes, *The Stagery of Shakespeare*, pp. 84-85, 101; also *The Mod. Lang. Rev.* IV, p. 84, Sir Mark Hunter on 'A Note on *King Lear*.'

[5]Due to the discovery of R. Prölss, who first expounded it in his *Von dem ältesten Drucken der Dramen Shakespeares* (1905), p. 307 ff. For commentary, see Neuendorff, *Die englische Volksbhüne im Zeitalter Shakespeares*, p. 192 ff. *Cf. Rev. Eng. Studies*, I, p. 449, C. M. Haines on 'The Law of Re-entry in Shakespeare.'

[6]In *Richard II*, I, 1, in the Folio and Q 5 (1634), but not earlier, one finds a stage direction before the King's last speech, 'Exit Gaunt,' The action of the scene does not require this departure, but the reason is revealed in *Scæna Secunda*, which begins 'Enter Gaunt and the Dutchesse of Gloucester.'

[7]See also *The Revenger's Tragedy*, Act II, and *All's Lost by Lust*, V, 1-2.

[8]An analysis made by me of 27 public-theatre and private-theatre plays extending from *Twelfth Night* to *The Traitor*, in all of which spoiled tags are to be found, shows that the proportion of such tags at act endings as compared with those at intermediate scene-endings was fully four to one. There is probably some significance in this, though to arrive at a scientific estimate one would doubtless require to analyse a greater number of plays.

[9] *The Text of Shakespeare's 'Hamlet,' p.* 76.

[10]*Times Literary Supplement* for September 25, 1924.

[11]See my article, 'What we owe to Melodrama' in *The Stage* for June 7, 1921.

[12]Printed in 1607 as an appendix to Gwynne's *Vertumnus*.

[13]Jonson, in his dedication to William, Earl of Pembroke, in the

1611 quarto of the play, tells him that posterity will probably honour him for having the courage 'in these jig-given times, to countenance a legitimate poem.'

[14]In some copies of the quarto of 1612, we get for 'jigges and daunces,' 'Daunces and Antikes,' a collocation helpfully indicative of the source.

[15]Add. MSS. 10,444, ff. 21 and 21*b*. For a reproduction of the music of the second dance, see my article entitled 'Notes on a Collection of Masque Music,' in *Music and Letters*, III, p. 58.

[16]For proof of the early existence of the custom, see Alwin Thaler, *Shakspere to Sheridan*, p. 165.

[17]On October 16, 1608, Shakespeare stood godfather at Stratford to William, son of Henry Walker, a local merchant and alderman. About the same period he was at law with John Addenbroke, another Stratfordian, and, on February 15, 1609, had judgment declared in his favour.

[18]Act I, sc. 2.

[19]*Cf.* F. P. Wilson on 'Ralph Crane, Scrivener to the King's Players,' in *The Library* for June, 1926. In this valuable article, it is demonstrated by means of facsimiles that Crane was the transcriber of the extant copy of *The Witch*, dedication and all. Mr. Wilson thinks the copy was made about 1620, or a little later.

[20]*Cf.* Mr. H. Dugdale Sykes's paper on 'The Problem of *Timon of Athens*,' in his *Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama*. Mr. Sykes's contention that Shakespeare merely revised an old play by Middleton and Day can be readily confuted, but the evidence advanced of the presence of Middleton's hand is serviceable in indicating that he undoubtedly revised the play.

[21]Middleton's *Works*, I, p. 424,

[22]*Sidelights*, p. 34.

[23]*The Metre of 'Macbeth*,' Princeton, 1903.

[24]*Ibid.*, pp. 11 ff. See also, pp. 19-21, regarding the remarkable number of rhymed pentameter lines in the play (108), and especially the unusually large number of couplets at the end of scenes and acts. Of these tags we are told that 'they are certainly bald enough and weak enough, and their salient characteristics—unequal rhythms, faulty rimes, violent cacophony, crowding of consonants, and withal a certain "catchiness"—are Middletonian symptoms.'

[25]See *Anglia*, VII (1884), p. 134, art. on 'Davenant's *Macbeth* and Shakespeare's Witches.' Fleay was the first to point out that the primary source of Middleton's inspiration was *The Masque of Queens*, and that he was under no indebtedness whatsoever to *Macbeth*.

[26]*Cf.* Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, reprint of issue of 1584, edit. Brinsley Nicholson (1886), appendix.

[27]One other disappearance is shrewdly to be suspected. In Act IV,

sc. 4, l. 68, is the stage direction 'Enter Peter,' evidently the astral spirit of a bygone materialization, for said Peter (once upon a time, no doubt, a servant of Tranio) has no tongue to justify his coming.

[28]*The Authorship of 'Timon of Athens,'* Columbia University Press, 1910. Mr. H. Dugdale Sykes (*Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama,* pp. 9-10) essays to show Dr. Wright the error of his ways, but, unfortunately he has himself none too clear vision.

[29]*The Aphrodysiall,* dir. 'Chambers (noise suppos'd for Powles) for actors' (Cf. *Modern Philology,* XII, 258, G. F. Reynolds on 'William Percy and his Plays.') It is true that we get directions for chambers in one or two of Marston's early seventeenth-century private-theatre plays, but there is reason to believe that the noise of the shot was suggestive rather than realistic. In the section on Fireworks in John Bate's *The Mysteries of Nature and Art* (2nd edit. 1635, Bk. II, p. 124), a method of imitating chambers is detailed. Note that when Fletcher's *Love's Pilgrimage* was revived at the Blackfriars in October, 1635, the shot fired in IV, 1, from a galley into the town was simply suggested by a pistol shot. Hence the prompter's marginal warning, 'Joh. Bacon ready to shoot off a pistol.'

[30]III, 4. This explains the curious direction, 'Winde hornes of Cornets' (elliptically given a little later as 'Winde hornes') in *The Two Noble Kinsmen,* III, 1, a forest scene.

[31]Whitelock's *Memorials,* as cited by Burney, *History of Music,* III, 376.

[32]For old prices of admission, see Alwin Thaler. *Shakspere to Sheridan,* Appendix II, especially pp. 307-8.

[33]*Cf.* Halliwell-Phillipps, *Outlines,* 3rd edit., p. 543. In the players' supplementary petition of 1635, it was maintained that they had to 'defray all charges of the house whatsoever, vizt, wages to hired men and boyes, musicke, lights, &c.'

[34]Narrowing the issue to the question of cornets, my first trace of these instruments in a public playhouse is at the Red Bull *circa.* 1620. See Markham and Sampson's *Herod and Antipater* (4to, 1622) Act I. It may be taken, I think, that by this period the King's Men had begun to use cornets at the Globe, creating emulation elsewhere.

[35]As a corollary on this, all versions of specific public-theatre plays presenting instructions for the use of cornets must have been made considerably after 1609.

[36]Such as *The Thracian Wonder, The Birth of Merlin, Thomas of Woodstock, Herod and Antipater,* and *The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green.*

[37]After a trumpet-flourish announcing a royal approach, the King and his train sometimes marched in processionally to the music of cornets. The sixteenth-century public theatre custom in such cases was for the trumpet flourish to be followed by the music of hautboys

(as in 2 *Henry VI*, I, 1). The later practice held good in Post-Restoration days. *Cf.* Fane's tragedy, *The Sacrifice* (4to, 1687), act V, near end, 'Trumpets and cornets: The Procession enters.'

[38]*Cf.* Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, IV, 2.

[39]I leave this sentence as it was written in 1923, despite the fact that Chambers (*ibid.*, II, 217) suggests the possibility that the play was 'a revision of the *Buckingham* which formed part of the repertory of Sussex's men in 1594.'

[40]Chambers, *ibid.*, II, 369 and 419.

[41]See note 34.

[42] *The Two Noble Kinsmen* belongs to the period of *Henry VIII*, but it is immaterial whether it was or was not originally a Blackfriars play since the text has been derived from a revised prompt copy made *circa* 1625. See my article 'New Light on *The Two Noble Kinsmen*' in *The Times Literary Supplement* for July 14, 1921.

[43]*Cf.* Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, II, 419-20.

[44]Imitative rivalry of this order is to be found recurring again and again in stage history. When the King's Men produced *The Lancashire Witches* in August, 1634, the Salisbury Court players furbished up an old play and brought it out as *Doctor Lambe and the Witches*.

[45]*London and the Countrey Carbonadoed and Quartered*, 1632. On May 12, 1636, Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels, records having received a fee from the Fortune players for permission 'to add scenes to an ould play, and to give it out for a new one' (Adams, *Herbert*, p. 37).

[46]I, 2, 'flourish Cornets,' II, 3; IV, 5; V, 2, 'trumpets.'

[47]Egerton MS. 1994.—II, 1, 'trumpets sound;' IV, 2, margin, flourish and music of cornets for masque. For the play, see Chambers, *Eliz. Stage*, IV, 42, under '1 Richard the Second.' Boas's dating of the manuscript is nearest the mark.

[48]Chambers, *ibid.*, III, 285.

[49]End of Act IV, 'Musick—Cornets'; opening of Act V, 'Sound Trumpets.'

[50]*Eliz. Stage*, II, 192, note.

[51]Since the first appearance of this study evidence has been advanced to show that the Pyramus and Thisbe interlude has come down to us in a revised, and most likely shortened state. See the vivacious, front-page article on 'The *Midsummer-Night's Dream*' in *The Times Literary Supplement* for December 18, 1924, col. 2, at bottom.

[52]See *Studies* (Dublin), Vol. VIII, 1919, pp. 442 ff., 'Shakespeare from a New Angle,' a lecture of which a revised and amplified version is given in my *Pre-Restoration Stage Studies*. Also *The Times Literary Supplement* for December 9, 1920, under 'The Date of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*.'

[53]*Cf.* Albert Feuillerat, *Le Bureau des Menus-Plaisirs et la Mise en Scène à la Cour d'Elizabeth* (Louvain, 1910), pp. 55-6.

[54] I, 2, ll. 109-114.

[55]*Sydney Papers*, II, 195, 197, 201, 203.

[56]For which see my paper on 'Thomas Ravenscroft's Theatrical Associations' in *The Modern Language Review*, XIX, 1924, pp. 418-423.

[57]*Cf.* Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, I, p. 169, where the references for my quotations will all be found.

[58]*Biog. Chron. Eng. Drama*, II, 324.

[59]For details, see Mr. J. W. Holme's recension of the play in the Arden series, introduction, pp. viii-x.

[60]*Cf.* G. C. Moore Smith, *Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia* (1913), pp. viii, 225.

[61]*Ibid.*, p. ix.

[62]Variorum, edit. 1821, II, 369.

[63]Moore Smith, *op. cit.*, p. x.

[64]*Cf.* his edition of Shakespeare, XV, 70.

[65]Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, III, 360-363.

[66] See Jonson's postscript to Q 1 of the play, as reprinted by the Malone Society.

[67]*Cf.* my article, 'The Theory of Assembled Texts' in *The Times Literary Supplement* for January 11, 1923.

[68]See Chap. XV, 'The *Hamlet* passage on the Blackfriars Children,' in his misconceived work on *The Children of the Chapel at Blackfriars*, 1597-1603.

[69]Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, IV, Appendix D, nos. cxxv, cxxviii.

[70]I leave this sentence as originally written, though I find now that Malone long since forestalled me in advancing the same opinion. When two Irishmen agree on a point their conclusion must surely be accurate!

[71]*Cf.* Chambers, op. cit., III, 364-6.

[72]See Furnivall's introduction to the First Quarto in *Shakspere Quarto Facsimiles*.

[73]*Cf.* B. A. P. Van Dam, *The Text of Shakespeare's Hamlet*, passim.

[74]For which see the Bodley Head reprint of Q 1, p. 60.

[75]For particulars of which, together with the text and a translation, see A. Cohn, *Shakespeare in Germany in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 235.

[76]*Cf.* Van Dam, *op. cit.*, pp. 50, 61-2.

[77]*Cf.* F. S. Boas, *Works of Thomas Kyd*, p. xlv; J. M. Robertson, *The Problem of Hamlet*; Van Dam, pp. 60-61.

[78]*The Welsh Ambassador* (Malone Society), pp. 17, 24, 33, 45, 64.

[79]Egerton MS., 1994. The play has been published, but not with scrupulous accuracy.

[80]*The Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. 326.

[81]W. Kelly, *Notices illustrative of the Drama in Leicester*, p. 142.

[82]Bodley Head reprint, p. 71.

[83]*Shakespeare's England*, II, 284.

[84]Cohn, *Shakespeare in Germany*.

[85]Whitaker's *History of Craven* (1812), p. 318.

[86]J. T. Murray, *English Dramatic Companies*, 1558-1642, II, 192.

[87]J. T. Murray, II, 163; Chambers, *Eliz. Stage*, II, 303-4.

[88]For which, see Chambers, *Eliz. Stage*, II, 208.

[89]Thanks to John Barrymore's magnetic, individualized presentation of the young prince, the revival ran for 101 nights. It is only fair to say that, afterwards, when Mr. Barrymore played Hamlet in London, the eccentricities of the Ghost were abated.

[90]Not to be confused with a night-rail. The night-gown of Shakespeare's day was merely a sort of dressing gown. It was generally made of silk or satin and faced with fur. Most probably the ghost followed prescript in wearing a white vizard, by which means, despite his change of attire, he would be readily recognized by the audience.

[91]In the early German *Hamlet*, I, 2, the ghost gives the Second Sentinel a buffet for laughing at him, and causes him to drop his musket and fly. See Albert Cohn, *Shakespeare in Germany*, for the text, and a translation, of the play.

[92]Cf. *The Battel of Alcazar*, I, 1, induction, "Accompanied . . . with devils coted in the shapes of men.' Also *The Witch of Edmonton* III, 1, 'Enter a Spirit vizarded. He throws off his mask, &c., and appears in the shape of Katherine.'

[93]Cf. *Shakespeare's England*, II, 97.

[94]See Halliwell's superb folio *Shakespeare* (1854), II, 156-7, for illustrations of Elizabethan masks.

[95]*Cf.* J. Q. Adams, *Shakespearean Playhouses*, p. 280, Busino's account of a visit to the Blackfriars in 1617.

[96]V, 2, ll. 242-246.

[97]Chambers, *Eliz. Stage*, III, 376, where other evidence to the same effect is likewise cited. But the curious thing is that a score of years after the performance of the *Masque of Blackness* a reference to it actually does occur in a play. In Brome's comedy, *The English Moor, or The Mock Marriage*, there is a scene in the third act where old Quicksands proceeds to disguise his wife by painting her face to represent a blackamoor. While so engaged he tells her that:

> 'Illustrious persons, nay even Queens themselves
> Have, for the glory of a night's presentment,
> To grace the work, suffered as much as this.'

As Jonson's old servant, Brome was of course conversant with his work.

[98]See Act IV, sc. 1, of the *Mermaid* reprint (*Nero and Other Plays*, pp. 165-6.)

[99]V, 3, ll. 459-61.

[100]Cf. *Arden of Feversham*, II, 2, ll. 51-91, as divided in *The Shakespeare Apocrypha*.

[101]Confusion to him is apt to be rendered all the more confounded when he finds Shylock (II, 5) calling his casements his 'house's ears.' Other dramatists, like Chapman, give no trouble on this score: windows to them are always apertures.

[102]*The Fortnightly Review* for August, 1919, p. 215, art. 'On Cutting Shakespear.'

[103]*Cf.* Sir D. Plunket Barton, *Links Between Ireland and Shakespeare* pp. 110-111, 247. For the words of the original Gaelic song, see *The Macdonald Collection of Gaelic Poetry* (1911), p. 246. Modernized versions of the music are to be found in *Playford's Musical Companion* (1673), and in Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Times*.

[104]*Tamburlaine the Great, Part I*, v. 1.

[105]II, 2, in the *Mermaid* Dekker. The original is undivided.

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